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TAMIL CULTURE

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The Harappa Script— A Tragedy in Timing

P. JOSEPH

A decade has elapsed since the famed historian, late Fr. Heras, S.J., hurled in 1953 a veritable bombshell into the scholarly world with the first volume of "Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture", published as Study No. 19 of the Indian Historical Research Institute,—St. Xavier's College, Bombay,—of which he was founder-director. Scholars do not yet seem to have fully recovered from the shock he gave with his unorthodox pronouncements.

True, ten years are too short a time for acceptance of a script-decipherment with such far-reaching results in the fields of not only ancient Indian but especially Sumerian, Egyptian, in fact, all western cultures, as have been initially and necessarily incompletely announced. The announcer himself did not expect any miracle and would have, had he lived to this day and needed it, taken sufficient consolation from the case of Champollion, whose reading of the Egyptian hieroglyphs had to wait well nigh half a century for recognition. Ten years, however, are long enough to review others' reactions to Fr. Heras' work.

On the one hand was the definitely partisan and tumultuously over-enthusiastic, if largely ill-informed, crowd that welcomed, with a fanfare of political trumpets, the publication of Fr. Heras' theory. This uncritical sector has done him the greatest harm, for he never expected even in his remotest dream that his view could be so turned, twisted and torn off context as to serve nefarious linguistic and racial ends. The greatest pity was that Fr. Heras' book saw the light of day when certain rabid individuals were looking around for some disinterested scholarly effort to bolster up their specious claims. They have, no doubt, made merry with a vengeance.

This tragedy in timing has prevented, to a large extent, the non-partisan Indian supporters from touching even with a pair of tongs a view, which, as a complete exposure of the carefully built-up, time-honoured Aryan cultural hoax, might divert them from the political line of emotional integration they had learnt to tow in recent years, particularly since independence. Thus a sizable slice of honest criticism has been kept away from the press and platform.

In regard to another section of Indian opinion, politics, instead of acting as a damper, seems to have egged it on to the ignoring of evidence. Take, for instance, the view that does not acknowledge the destruction of Harappan cities by the Aryans on the plea that there is no direct testimony. Because a debris layer divides the Harappan remains and those characterized by cemetery (H) ware at the west gate and associated terraces of the Harappa citadel mound and also in the cemetery area, as proved by the trench stratigraphically connecting the (H) and R. 37 (Harappan) cemeteries, the cemetery (H) culture is supposed to have arrived after the end of Harappa. But elsewhere on the citadel mound, cementery (H) ware turned up mixed with Harappan pottery (as it did on the top-layer of Mohenjo-daro.) The only legitimate inference is that the foreigners occupied the rest of the mound prior to and the west gate area (the cemetery (H) burials were contemporaneous with it) after the end of Harappa. Add to this the Jhukar culture, comprising alien pottery and seals, amulets, beads as well as weapons with a West-Asian stamp, in squatters' dwellings, in association with huddled skeletons and jewelry hoards at Jhukar, Chanhu-daro, Mohenjo-daro etc., similar happenings in Baluchistan and Sistan, Indo-European movements in West Asia and the Rg. Vedic boast of the destruction of Dasya strongholds; the circumstantial evidence for the overthrow of Harappa by the Aryans is overwhelming. To maintain in the face of all these facts that the Aryans entered India after Harappa had died a natural death seems to smack of political tutelage.

Apart from these politically affected standpoints, scholarly criticism, it must be admitted, has been disappointing, in the sense that not sufficient notice has been taken of the outcome of nearly two decades of dedicated endeavour. The reason was probably lack of proper publicity. An ardent ancient mariner, he had no use for modern gadgets of successful navigation. He was quite indifferent to the nature of the landing. In this he was a typical Dravidian supremely unconcerned with,—almost too lazy, one might say, to bother about,—others' reactions to his views and ways.

This would explain the opinion, not quite scholarly, though well-meant, held in certain circles that Fr. Heras had seen a vision! This writer pleads guilty to the charge of inadvertently contributing his share to the reaction with his not very scientific remark, that the decipherment became such a magnificent obsession with Fr. Heras that he even dreamt about it often and solved some ticklish problem in his sleep.[1]

A section of the scholarly coterie preferred the waiting game to taking sides. They have sat on the fence non-committal though not without an occasional concession, that the reading could be correct in view of the apparently sound principles Fr. Heras laid down prior to embarking on the task of actual decipherment.

Some have summarily dismissed the problem with the pontifical, if somewhat obtuse-minded, dictum that the script has not been read.[2] What they apparently meant was the reading has not been generally accepted. But how will acceptance,—or reasoned rejection,—come unless scholars cease to fight shy of the issue and tackle it boldly by traversing the same arduous road as the author himself took and checking the theory at every turn before arriving at journey's end?

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1 Joseph, "A Dravidian from Spain", *Tamil Culture*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, p. 5.
2 cf. e. g. Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, p. 178.

At the back of all this criticism was the basic complaint, quite justified though sometimes unexpressed, that Fr. Heras had not disclosed the entire key to the decipherment of the Indus writing. The uncharitably inclined even sneered that he was scared (*sic*) to put the key before the public, lest the hollowness of his claim be exposed. That someone other than the decipherer himself should account for the situation must seem strange. And yet this writer, with the only credential that he was Fr. Heras' student-collaborator, would try and explain the working of his mind.

The complete key, it may at once be said, was got ready in the form of several charts. Fr. Heras has explained the process all too briefly though he has mentioned all the steps involved. He had fully intended to publish the whole key, showing how he arrived at the meaning of each sign and the reading of each inscription as an elaborate dictionary and *corpus inscriptionum* of the Indus Valley language and writing. The few pages,—compared to the rest of volume I,—devoted to the topic of decipherment are liable to give a lop-sided view of the time and labour involved in the task. Far more time was taken up in arriving at the final meaning of the inscriptions than in discovering concordances between Indian and foreign cultures. These correlations in material finds had been suspected ever since Marshall announced, in the late thirties, the results of his dig at Mohenjo-daro. Fr. Heras, no doubt, added to the list of similarities. But at the start he did not dream even remotely of the possibility of corroboration from the inscriptions. And when he did notice it, he decided he should first publish the cultural correspondences. As he could not do so without giving some idea of the process by which he read the writing, he included it as an introductory and subsidiary topic in his book, the main purpose of which was to impress on foreign scholars,—the study of foreign civilisations is still in its infancy in India,—the importance of a new source to elucidate problems in their own particular fields and on Indian scholars, particularly Sanskritists, the necessity of a new approach to the study of ancient Indian culture. Hence

the very title of the book : " Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture " and not " Decipherment of Harappa Script ", as one might have expected.

Had he dealt with only the decipherment question in the first volume, as he had originally intended, Sumerologists, Egyptologists and Biblical experts would never have known the extraordinary treasures laid bare in the Indus basin. The Sumerians, the Egyptians and the Hebrews were not the only people of the ancient world who owed a debt to India. The Canaanites, the Phoenicians, the Hittites, the Minoans, the Cypriots, the Mycenaeans, the Etruscans, the Iberians,—in short, all nations bordering on the Mediterranean,—were more or less indebted. As they, however, apparently derived their cultures—studies on them were to appear subsequently—from the Egyptians and the Sumerians, with the Biblical folk contributing their own pattern to the grand mosaic, Fr. Heras wanted to give scholars a quick glance of what India did to her close neighbours, who acted as culture-carriers to almost the rest of the then known world. Could he have had a premonition of the approaching end,—he outlived his work only by a couple of years ?

While, for particular reasons, he did not set down fully the key to the Chinese, rather Harappan, puzzle, he, nevertheless, explained clearly the principles he had laid down before attempting the solution. Unbiased critics must admit the soundness of these principles. Actually they boil down to two basic ones. The first, that the Harappa culture was non-Aryan and pre-Aryan, is admitted by most modern scholars. It is only the unscholarly fringe that, nursing even in this late day the outmoded vision of *herrenvolk,* still sees Aryan authorship in the glory that was Harappa.

Once this is granted, the other basic principle, that Harappa was Dravidian-inspired, seems to follow. And yet those who accepted the first apparently found the second not very welcome. This position has driven them to make rather ridiculous suggestions, e.g. that the Harappan language

could have been Munda.[3] The non-Aryan languages in the country today are Dravidian and Munda. There is hardly any trace of Negrito speech. The Munda languages are as a group in a rudimentary stage. While what is true today need not necessarily have been true yesterday and while loss of culture is a historical fact, yet that the Munda-speakers, after having been powerful enough to have imposed their language on Harappan society, got so thoroughly decivilised as to descend to their present palaeolithic level seems unthinkable. On the contrary, a representative collection of the Dravidian language group has reached a high level of development, with one of them, namely Tamil, possessing the oldest extant literature of any living language. If, therefore, the Harappa script is to be read in a non-Aryan language, it could hardly be other than Dravidian, rather proto-Dravidian.

This *a priori* deduction is for all practical purposes confirmed by archaeological evidence, pertaining to Harappan anthropology. Though the available data are not exhaustive, they seem to present a cross-section of the Harappa folk. Of the four elements,—the Mediterranean, proto-Australoid, Alpine and Mongoloid,—the dominant was not the proto-Australoid, which spoke Munda but the Mediterranean, which in India has all along been equated by anthropologists with the original Dravidian-speakers.

The Dravida-phobes, unmoved by all this evidence but as if almost conscious of the untenability of their extreme position, have voted for postponement of the reading of Harappa script until some lucky spade would throw up a bilingual inscription.[4] Archaeologists may yet find the Indian equivalent of the Rosetta stone or Bahistun rock. On the contrary they may not. The Indian bilingual record was, perhaps, on custom-sanctioned palm-leaf, which failed to resist the ravages of time. Or there may have been no

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3 cf. e.g. Piggott, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
4 cf. e.g. Piggott, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

such record at all. In Egypt and Iran-Iraq, civilisations succeeded one another until through Greek and Persian we could get a glimpse of Egyptian, Sumerian and other languages and cultures. In India, however, for over a millennium after the Aryan inroads (roughly from 2000 to 500 B.C.) we are confronted with the Dark Age, of which there are many mute, material remains,[5] that eloquently testify to the general loss of the art of writing. When with the succeeding historical period civilisation and writing re-emerge, we meet the familiar (wherever the Aryans went) phenomenon of Dravidians largely speaking Aryan languages, though modified, and Aryans adopting wholesale the Dravidian culture, minus language. By then the Indus script had died out and Brahmi had developed, the apparent connection of which with the former, through the chalcolithic and megalithic graffiti[6] and symbols of the punch-marked coins, cannot yet be worked out for want of sufficient material.

This apart, a bilingual inscription is no complete open-sesame. Champollion found that out when he read the Egyptian hieroglyphs in the languages of the Coptic church

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5 To discuss the main remains, the chalcolithic culture of Central India and the Deccan was apparently developed by Harappan fusing with, around 2000 B.C., and turning into neolithic a hunting microlithic. In some parts of the Southern Deccan, however, this cultural amalgam came in contact with an earlier local neolithic, characterized mainly by the pointed-butt polished stone-axe. In the north, from the start of the 1st. millennium B.C. Aryan influence seems to have been felt. The mid-ribbed daggers of Navdatoli and Chandoli were Aryan-inspired as this technique was unknown in India earlier. The associated cut-spout (found also at Gilund in Rajasthan) and channel-spouted vessels too may be Aryan. The chalcolithic (Painted Grey ware) culture of the Gangetic basin is much more difficult to interpret because of a hiatus between it and Harappa at Rupar and Alamgirpur. If Aryan at all, it was a local product, flowering sometime after Harappa's end and responsible for the mid-ribbed swords and channel-spouted bowl of the copper hoards.

6 Lal ("From the Megalithic to the Harappan: Tracing back the Graffiti on the Pottery", *Ancient India,* No. 16, pp. 23-24), who recently pointed out a few similarities between the graffiti and the scripts, says it would be presumptuous to conclude that the graffiti had any syllabic, phonetic or alphabetic values. This may be commendable archaeological caution but is certainly unimaginative historical interpretation, especially after admitting the indebtedness of the Central Indian and Deccan chalcolithic to Harappa. The graffiti, as obvious script symbols descended from the Harappan, doubtless had certain values, though we do not know what they were. Fr. Heras had studied all the signs except the chalcolithic graffiti, which were unknown then.

that preserved the ancient Egyptian tongue as the medium of its religious rites. The hornets that buzzed around his head went back to nest long after he died. Even if a bilingual inscription containing, say, Brahmi and Indus characters, were discovered, the language problem will still remain and have to be tackled separately. A mere knowledge of the sounds of the Indus signs can give no indication of the language in which they have to be so sounded. The probability of that language having been Dravidian, rather proto-Dravidian, cannot be peremptorily brushed aside.

The chances of unearthing a bilingual record not being very bright, the problem of arriving at the sound values of the Harappan signs has to be approached from another angle. In the case of the Egyptian and Sumerian scripts the passage was from sound values to language, whereas in that of the Harappan it is the other way round. That is what Fr. Heras has shown. If his working hypothesis has, by providing a fresh perspective and adding a new dimension to world history, yielded much unforeseen and almost incredible results as it has, it is up to others to prove the contrary, instead of summarily dismissing it and endlessly awaiting a Rosetta stone—or merely sitting on the fence.

Fr. Heras tantalisingly withheld the decipherment key for a while, though purveying sufficient succulent morsel to apparently whet the scholarly appetite. The pungent Dravidian fare, however, failed to tickle the jaded palate. Was it too pungent to savour ?

Does it mean, then, that Fr. Heras' effort has evoked no proper response at all ? Far from it. The decade's end has witnessed some favourable developments.

Lahovary [7] has posited a pre-Indo-European, incorporating and polysynthetic linguistic substratum for the entire

7 Lahovary, *La Diffusion des Langues Anciennes du Proche-Orient : Leurs Relations avec le Basque, le Dravidien et les Parlers Indo-Europeens Primitifs.* Berne, Francke, 1957. English translation : *Dravidian Origins and the West : Newly Discovered Ties with the Ancient Culture and Languages, including Basque, of the pre-Indo-European Mediterranean World.* Orient Longmans, 1963.

region, extending from India to Spain, where the only modern vestiges are Dravidian, Caucasian and Basque. The dead branches of this prolific linguistic tree were, besides others, Sumerian, Hurrian, Elamite, Cappadocian, Carian, Pelasgian and Ligurian. He further avers that the speakers of this linguistic group ushered in the neolithic revolution and the subsequent chalcolithic civilisations. He also points out that this vast fertile crescent had not only linguistic and cultural but also racial (Mediterranean) unity, which was later shattered by Semitic and Indo-European invaders. Balakrishna Nair, delivering the 1962 Sir William Meyer lecture at the Madras university, used Lahovary's findings and concluded that Fr. Heras' thesis that the Harappan language was Dravidian was clearly not fantastic![8]

Has the tide turned? There is still, however, the question of Indian contribution to western cultures through Sumer to be faced squarely. Present-day opinion is that the neolithic (e.g. Jericho—c. 6000 B.C., Jarmo—c. 4800 B.C.) and Urban (the first being Sumerian) revolutions started in West-Asia and spread to India and elsewhere. Harappa,—it is said—if not the result of a direct chalcolithic migration from Iraq-Iran, must have evolved out of some neolithic peasant culture, say, Kile Gul Mohammed (3500-3100 B.C.), which owed its origin to Iran. Fr. Heras put forward no theory regarding the beginnings of the Indian neolithic[9] and chalcolithic.[10] He, however, vigorously con-

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8 *The Sunday Standard,* Jan. 13, 1963.

9 Kile Gul Mohammed or any other Indian neolithic centre need not have owed its origin to Iran. The conditions for the neolithic revolution, namely, the wild flora and fauna for domestication, were available in the neighbourhood and the transition from hunting to agriculture could have taken place independent of external inspiration, though later than elsewhere. Man was certainly resourceful enough to have crossed the neolithic hurdle at different sites, albeit not simultaneously. Prof. Braidwood's warning to diffusionists at the Conference on Asian Archaeology in 1961 not to interpret all cultural trends in terms of the Near East, just because they know it best, has been quite timely.

10 To which particular peasant culture Harappa owed its beginnings cannot be decided until virgin soil has been reached at several sites in the Indus valley through scientific stratigraphy. Nobody knows what is in store for us below the explored levels. Wheeler's work at Harappa site

tended that the Sumerian civilisation with its pictophonographic script, special glyptic designs, elaborate town-planning and advanced religious systems,—regarded by most until recently as transplanted into Mesopotamia from outside during the Uruk (or Early Proto-literate) period,—was definitely Harappan.

Uruk red ware has been generally considered to have come from the neighbourhood of North Syria. Since, however, no great culture is known to have flourished there that early and since the main item of Sumerian culture was the temple, the beginnings of which had already appeared in the earliest period of the South-Mesopotamian sequence, namely, proto-Ubaid, Sumerian civilisation is now thought to be a natural growth out of proto-Ubaid under a North-Syrian impulse.[11] To provide sufficient time for such growth some Sumerologists, basing their calculations mainly on the unproven assumption of a 100|140- year average life of ancient temples, have inflated pre-Sargonid chronology to cover a span of nearly 2500 years, about 850 of which they have assigned to Early Dynastic, 400 to Jemdet Nasr, 450 to Uruk, 500 to Ubaid and 350 to proto-Ubaid, thus bringing it as close to Jarmo neolithic as possible.[12] Conscious, however, of impossibility of verification of their basic assumption, they have admitted that the chronology could be deflated.[13] This apart, it is difficult to see how a North-Syrian culture, not particularly superior to Ubaid, could have provided the necessary incentive to the Ubaid folk to

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below the citadel defences was rather perfunctory. Khan's dig at Kot Diji has not helped very much. Their contention that the unslipped dull red ware at the earliest level marked the peasant culture from which Harappa developed has been disputed by the excavators of Kalibangan, who think that ware was part and parcel of the Harappan ceramic complex. Perhaps, the present American effort at Mohenjo-daro would point towards an answer. Harappa was not a city-state but an empire, comprising the Indus basin and a wide area far beyond and so the answer may not be as simple as surmised.

11 Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East* (Evergreen Edition, 1957), pp. 119, 124.

12 *Id.*, pp. 170-171, 232-233.

13 *Id.*, p. 238.

rise to the occasion,[14] unless, of course, it meant an invasion, about which the archaeological record is silent. All indications are to the effect that Sumerian civilisation went to the delta of the twin rivers from the east, in accordance with the Sumerians' own tradition of their origin in Dilmun,[15]—" the place where the sun rises " and to which Zinsudra, the Sumerian Noah, was transported after death, by the gods, to live as an immortal, an important maritime city-state, abounding in barley, dates and timber, importing goods from the whole then known world and exporting, besides other things, timber and ivory.

The plain red ware,—a symbol of utilitarian efficiency and occupying a dominant place in the Harappan ceramic outfit,—was considered different from Uruk red ware without any compelling reasons. The whole problem needs to be looked into *de novo*, especially because of its association with just those things,—script, town-planning, advanced religion, etc.,—that made Sumerian civilisation what it was.

The stumbling block for most western .scholars is Wheeler's relative chronology for Harappa, i.e., 2500—1500 B.C., based on Harappan contacts with Sumer during largely Akkadian times. Between Harappa and Sumer there are plenty of similarities but their provanance can be argued either way, unless they are typically Indian, in which case their occurrence in Sumer can be explained only on the basis of borrowing from India.

The typically Indian humped bull was found painted, —once in a scene of worship,—on scarlet ware from Early

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14 Childe's (*op. cit.*, p. 124) suggestion that the outside influence was Semitic is rather off the mark, since the Semites from the western desert had hardly any worthwhile culture, at that time, that could have sparked off the grand Sumerian achievements.

15 Kramer (letter to the editor, *The Times of India*, dated Jan. 29, 1961) has identified Dilmun with Harappa, since Bahrain, generally identified with Dilmun, has yielded to the Danish archaeologists hardly enough evidence to warrant the above description. Fr. Heras favoured the Bahrain-Dilmun equation and identified Harappa with Magan of the Sumerian records, which, however, do not speak of it in such glowing terms as Dilmun.

Dynastic levels of Sumer and Elam. The same animal was carved on a cylinder seal from Ur. It was also carved on a steatite cup from Tell Agrab and asphalt vases from Susa. Many clay figurines of the animal were recovered from the latter site. A bunch of golden peepul leaves,[16]—typically Indian,—turned up at Ur. At Tell Asmar was found a cylinder seal with an elephant and two each of crocodile and rhinoceros, done in typical Indian style, as if by an Indian artist. Whoever he was, he could have got the idea of the elephant only from India where, to judge from animal remains and glyptic art, the elephant had been domesticated even in Harappan times. A piece of wood picked up from the temple of the moon-goddess at Mukheir has been identified as Indian teak. Of the 30-odd seals, with the Harappan script, from Sumer even the most conservative opinion considers one or two as pre-Accadian, i.e. at least Early Dynastic. The stone pots with the hut design, widespread in West Asia can be traced to Harappa, where one was found in the earliest Mohenjo-daro level, and another in a late level.[17]

Three cylinder seals studied by Frankfort can be cited as evidence of Harappan contacts with Sumer during Jemdet Nasr times. They depict elephant-like creatures. One shows the *taurelephantus*, found in some Harappan seals. Even if the whole composite animal was not Indian-inspired, at least the elephant part must have been. A Jemdet Nasr seal with thirteen unicorns, done in typical Indian style familiar from many a Harappan seal, is noteworthy. The lion-hunt stele from the Jemdet Nasr layer [18] at Uruk is interesting. The hunters look like Semites. The desert from which they came was no place for lions, nor was Sumer. Even if the Sumerian lapidary depicted Sumerians in Semitic guise,

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16 Wrongly identified as birch leaves by Woolley.

17 Piggott's contention (*op. cit.*, pp. 115-117) that the hut-pots and scarlet ware painting repertoire originated in Kulli culture is unconvincing, since there is nothing specially Baluchi about the hut-pots and since the humped bull was a native of the Indian plains, not Baluchi hills.

18 According to some the stele was a votive offering made to a temple of the Uruk period.

as some think, he could have got the lion motif only from India, where the animal has always been native.

The lion motif carries Indo-Sumerian contacts right down to the Uruk period and the beginnings of Sumerian civilisation. Vide the Gilgamesh seals, dating from the earliest Sumerian times and depicting the lion-fighter. Apart from the motif itself the theme seems almost a replica of that on certain Harappan ones.

We have, indeed, come a long way since the days of Vincent Smith who had once said India had no prehistory. The Roman sage who sang : *ex oriente lux,* had he been alive today, would have seen greater significance in his dictum than he did then. Scholars, particularly western, have to contend boldly with the problem of the indebtedness of western civilisation to India through the Near East. The *quid boni-a-Nazareth* attitude needs drastic revision.

The Goddess of Forests in Tamil Literature

C. G. DIEHL

The subject will be restricted to dealing with feminine beings having the word for forest or wilderness as part of their names, i.e. Sanskrit Araṇya and Tamil Kāṭu.

Rigveda X, 146 is addressed to Araṇyānī, or the wilderness as a feminine being, translated by Geldner as "Frau des Waldes".[1] She is mentioned only in this and coordinated texts. The commentary of Nirukta IX, 30 runs: "Wilderness (Araṇyānī) is the wife of desert. The seer addresses her with the words: 'O Wilderness (Araṇyāni) how is it that thou who disappearest in deserts[2] [i.e. forests] like one directed to some place onwards doest not seek the village'" etc.[3] There is no Nirukta commentary to the other slokas of the hymn. In Bṛhad-devatā's list of gods and myths in the Rigveda the hymn X: 146 is quoted as "meant to repel a rival wife".[4] The Taittiriya Brahmana 2, 5, 5, 6 and 7 simply repeats the text of the Rigveda. In the Atharvaveda we find Araṇyānī in one place (12, 2, 53) considered by Griffith[5] as

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[1] Der Rig-Veda, übersetzt von K. F. Geldner, III, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 35, 1951, 379. Cp. "The jungle goddess". "The forest as a whole appears as a deity" (A. A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, Strassburg, 1897, p. 154).

[2] Geldner takes the corresponding Sanskrit word to be a repetition of the vocative and has only "die du fast verschwunden bist" (ibid.).

[3] The Nighantu and the Nirukta by Lakshman Sarup, English translation and notes, Oxford 1921, p. 149.

[4] VIII, B 57. The Bṛhad-devatā, attributed to Saunaka. A summary of the deities and myths of the Rig-Veda, ed. by A. A. Macdonell, II, translation and notes, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 6, 1904, p. 308.

[5] Hymns of the Atharva Veda, translated by R. H. T. Griffith, Benares, 1895, II, p. 110.

the wilderness as such: "Seek the dark wood and the wilderness (Araṇyānīm)", while Whitney-Lanman translates it "forest spirit".[6]

It is remarkable that Araṇyānī is not found in the epics, because the forest with its inhabitants, dangers and conditions of life occupies much space in them. The dwelling in the forest is in fact an integral part of epic literature. Such narratives are found in both the Mahabharata[7] and the Ramayana[8] and also in the famous Tamil epic poem Cilappatikāram. This poem has a chapter Kāṭukāṉ Kātai as a counterpart to Nāṭukāṉ Kātai, which deals with life in the inhabited area. The words Nāṭu and Kāṭu represent two opposites somewhat like the Nordic "Midgård" and "Utgård".[9] Nāṭu is the place where men live and till the soil. Kāṭu is the forest and the wilderness, the part of the country where man has not built his house or grown his crops

The Tamils divided their country of old into five regions, Tiṇai.[10] Among these regions Pālai comes nearest to Kāṭu. The lexicon describes it as "arid, desert tract, aridity, barrenness".[11] Comparable are also Kuṟiñci, the mountainous region, and Mullai, forest and grazing grounds. The five regions represent different customs and manners and are fixed not only with reference to different types of landscape but even more on account of the occupational pursuits of the inhabitants. A connection between Kāṭu and Pālai may be found in the place name Palghat in the western part of S. India. It is a combination of Pālai and Kāṭu and reads in Tamil Pālaikkāṭu. A hybrid is found in the combination Pālaivaṉam (from Sanskrit Vana, forest). More obvious connections exist with regard to the "Spirit of the forest".

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6 Atharva-Veda Samhita, Harvard Oriental Series 7 and 8, II, 1905, p. 682.

7 Araṇyakaparvam, Mhb 30. 8 Araṇyakāṇḍa.

9 W. Grönbech, Midgård och Menneskelivet, Copenhagen, 1912, p. 34.

10 See Tamil Lexicon, Madras, 1926-36 under Aintiṇai.

11 Tamil Lexicon ad hoc.

The god of the Pālai is the virgin deity Kaṉṉi[12] and there are a number of goddesses with the word Kāṭu as the first part of their names, e.g Kātukiḷāḷ, Kāṭukāl, etc. In the same way we find Pālaikkiḷatti, the mistress of the Kāṭu and the Pālai respectively. The other regions have no such feminine deity, but Kuṟiñci has an exact masculine counterpart Kuṟiñcikkiḷavaṉ, the lord of Kuṟiñci. He is well known in S. India under the name of Murukaṉ and has his temples on hilltops in many places. As such, he has been closely connected or identified with Subrahmaṇya of the Saivite pantheon.

All those goddesses are in the lexica given as manifestations of Durgā, a simplification which does not add to clarity. What can be said is that lonely wanderers have met with a woman in the forest and have given a description of her which makes her recognizable in many places.

The Vedic hymn referred to above has in its third and fourth slokas a description of Araṇyānī which brings her in line with the forest goddesses of S. India. She is mockingly deceitful as the forest itself. She represents "die Sinnestäuschungen im Walde zur Abendzeit", says Geldner.[13] Macdonell explains it in this way: "The uncanny sounds heard in her dark solitudes are weirdly described."[14] It is as if cows were ruminating. The wanderer thinks he sees a house and hears a cart squeaking. It is the Lady of the forest.[15] He who spends the night in the woods hears the voice of someone crying.[16]

The forest is uncanny. The first lines of the hymn give expression to the astonishment of the singer to see the Lady of the forest disappear (into the depth of the woods, according to Nirukta), instead of going in the direction of the vil-

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[12] A. Singaravelu Mudaliar, Abidhana Chintamani, p. 1100.

[13] Der Rig-Veda III, p. 380, note.

[14] A. A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, Strassburg, 1897, p. 154.

[15] Rigveda X, 146, 3.

[16] Rigveda X, 146, 4.

lage. She is a stranger and is addressed: "Hallo there!"[17] It is part of the delusion of the forest that one does not know who it is one has caught sight of. The hunter sees somebody in the forest but he does not know if it is a goddess, a peacock or a beautiful woman.[18]

Men are afraid of the Lady of the forest but take consolation from the knowledge that she will not kill them if they do not come too near.[19] The immediate purpose of the hymn is given in the sixth sloka: "I have sung your praise" and in so doing the singer has presented her as "Nach salbe riechend, duftig, speisereich (Bahvannām) auch ohne Pflügen".[20]

A delusive, beautiful lady of the forest, whose intrigues and wrath frighten people, stands before us in this hymn, about which Oldenberg, not unexpectedly, says: "The hymn is late but its contents old."[21]

Oldenberg finds parallels to the gods of the wilderness in Buddhist tradition and remarks on the paucity of such figures in the Rigveda as well as in the Atharva.[22] There is no question that such gods and demons would have been entirely missing in Vedic times.[23] Popular religious conceptions of today hold innumerable examples of similar beings. The material is vast and not yet classified to allow a survey.

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[17] Geldner: "Heda." Cp. the use of the pronoun "Asau als Substitut für N. N.", G. Liebert, Zum Gebrauch des W-demonstrativa im ältesten Indoiranischen, Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, N. F., avd. 1, bd 50, nr 9, 1954, p. 46.

[18] Kural 1081. Tirukkural. Published by the South India Saiva Siddhanta Works, Madras, 1937, p. 426. Comparable to the expression used by L. Renou: "La Yogeśvarī de la Rājataranginī est une sorte de Lorelei indienne" (L'Inde classique I, Paris, 1947, p. 528).

[19] Rigveda X, 146, 5.

[20] Geldner, op. cit., 380.

[21] H. Oldenberg, op. cit., 258.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Op. cit., 259.

The Mahabharata knows terrible demons in the forest, mostly of the male sex. Its third book, the Vanaparva, chapter 11, has for its heading "Kirmīravadhaparva". Kirmīra was a Rāksasa in the Kāmyaka forest "with eight teeth standing out, with eyes of copper hue, and with the hair of his head blazing and standing erect. . ."[24]

In South India there are plenty of female forest spirits. A few of them resembling Araṇyānī are given below.

Kāṭamarcelvi

"The rich Lady of the forest people" (Kāṭamar). According to TL[25], she is "Durgā as dwellling in the forest".

Kāṭṭēṟi

"Forest dweller", the most common representative in popular Hinduism of today. The lexicon characterizes her merely as "an evil spirit".

Kāṭukāḷ, Kāṭukiḻāḷ, Kāṭukiḻavōḷ

All three are varieties of the same theme "the Mistress of the forest". The dictionaries call them "Durgā as goddess of the forest". The first name Kāṭukāḷ can be translated as "the black woman of the forest". Literally the last to mean "the woman who belongs to or possesses the forest". Just as Pālaikkiḻatti (and Pālaikkuriyavaḷ mean "the woman who belongs to are possesses Pālai".

Kāṭukeḻucelvi

This is a variant of Kāṭamarcelvi and means "the rich Lady who lives in the forest". The word Celvi is generally used as a respectful term of address to a woman added after the name. Most of all, however, the word refers to the goddess of wealth, Lakshmī, and its use here can indicate a

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[24] The Mahabharata, translated by Protap Chandra Roy, vol. 3, Vana Parva, Calcutta, 1884, p. 32.

[25] The Tamil Lexicon, Madras, 1926-36, hereafter quoted as TL.

raising of the Lady of the forest to a position of rank in the Hindu pantheon. It is also reasonable to connect Celvi with Bahvannā "rich at food", the Rigvedic epithet of Araṇyānī.

Information about Kāṭṭeṟi can be had through folklore queries only. She has no place in literature. In daily life however, she plays a considerable part. Amulets are worn as protection against her nefarious activities, but she may, on the other hand, be approached for help at childbirth.[26] "The Hindus worship her as the goddess of the forest lest evil should befall and destroy them."[27]

About Kāṭukāḷ-Kāṭukiḷāḷ the reference book just quoted says she is a Śakti, a goddess of the forest, and adds a list of alternative names: Moṭi, which the TL wants to connect with a word meaning "height, eminence", but which is more likely related to an identical word moṭi meaning "arrogance, show, deceit",[28] Kāritāy "the black mother" (cp. Kāṭukāḷ above), Koṟṟi or Koṟṟavai, "Durgā as the goddess of victory",[29] from Koṟṟam, victory, but assumed by TL to come from the root Kol, kill, which gives a more sinister aspect to the goddess—Araṇyānī also was known to kill[30]—Pāri, a word with many meanings—it can mean "earth" or "wife" (Sanskrit Bhāryā)—Cūri, by the lexicon also given as Durgā and "goddess of the forest"[31] with reference to an old lexicographic work.[32] Vaṭuki is a similar lexicographic loan connecting the goddess with the Telugu people living north (Vaṭu vaṭa, north) of the Tamil country. The TL identifies her with Kāḷi, the mother of Bhairava. Finally Mūtaṇaṅku, "the old damsel", also said to be Durgā.[33]

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[26] C. G. Diehl, Instrument and Purpose, Lund, 1956, pp. 273 and 180.
[27] A. Singaravelu Mudaliar, Abidhana Chintamani, Madras, 1934, [p. 403.
[28] TL, ad loc.
[29] TL, ad loc.
[30] Rigveda H, 146, 5.
[31] TL, ad loc.
[32] Piṅkalanikaṇṭu.
[33] Anaṅku is given in TL as "celestial damsel" or "demoness".

This list of names hardly warrants any other conclusion than a recognition of a goddess of the wilderness. She is not, however, any goddess or demon. The list implies a definite selection from among an endless number of female demons and divine beings, but it does not clearly indicate what characteristics have formed the selective principle. To some extent Durgā serves as a common denominator, but until we know in full who Durgā is, the connection seems to be nothing more than a vague attempt to explain "the Lady of the forest" by means of a more well-known type.

There are, however, some distinct features brought to light in Tamil literature. In one of the three extant Mahākāvya of the Tamil literature,[34] the Maṇimēkalai by Cittalai Cāttanār, the poem about Kōvalan's daughter, who became a Buddist nun, there is a passsage on Kātamarcelvi's temple. The commentator says she is identical with Kātukiḷāḷ and Durgā.

This gains further support from the description of Kāṭamar Celvi given in the poem (18 : 115–116), where she is pictured as standing with a beggar's bowl alleviating the hunger of the devils.[35] The story about Maṇimēkalai tells how she was given such a bowl and fed the poor.[36] A similar story is found in the Mahabharata. " The sun then showed himself to Yudhiṣṭhira and gave him a copper vessel, saying that if Pāñcālī [i.e. Krisṇā [37]] kept this vessel, fruits, roots, meat and vegetables cooked in their kitchen would be inexhaustible for twelve years." [38]

The rich Lady of the forest is a suitable name for a woman who provides food from a bowl, which never becomes empty. Bahvannā she is indeed.

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[34] L'Inde classique II, p. 309 sq.

[35] Tamil "Kaṭi" = Pēy,.

[36] Maṇimēkalai, 11th song, Pattiram peṟṟa kātai.

[37] Name of Draupadi (Apte's Sanskrit Lexicon).

[38] III : 2,. § 310 from S. Sörenson, An index to the names in the Mahabharata, London, 1904, p. 66.

She has other features, however. Her temple is next to the burning ground, which, lying outside the dwelling place of men, is called Kāṭu, i.e. Cuṭukāṭu, and is described as a big place with four gates and an altar in the middle. The temple is surrounded by trees with their branches lowered by the weight of heads of men, who with unwavering mind have paid their "life debts" by tying their heads to the branches and then cutting them off. The commentator calls it Avippali (from Sanskrit Havis-Bali), and the TL has along with the Vedic meaning "oblation" also "warrior's offering his own life in fulfilment of a vow". No further explanation of Kāṭukiḷāḷ is given. The Mistress of the wilderness is connected with death and lives in terrible surroundings of corpses—the narrative excels in atrocious body-snatching by demons—and also receives life as an offering from faithful devotees.[39]

Under her other name, Kāṭukeḷucelvi, she is mentioned in the oldest extant literature in Tamil, Tolkāppiyam, but only in passing as an example of cult to be observed on the second day of the lunar month, Paraṇināḷ, when she is to be given porridge and honoured with tuṇaṅkai dance.[40]

The Forest Spirit is also found in Cilappatikāram, another great poem of the Tamils,[41] where the story of Kōvalaṉ, the father of Maṇimēkalai, and his wife Kaṇṇaki is told. These two leave their own place, Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṉam, the port on the east coast, and travel towards Maturai, the old capital of the Pandya kingdom, farther to the South. They can choose one of three roads, and they decide to proceed on a road which partly runs through Kaāṭu. A sage tells them

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[39] Maṇimēkalai 6. 53 Edited by V. P. P. M. Kacivicuvanatan Cettiyar (1946) 1951. This is not the place to deal with the double meaning given to the burning ground by the Buddhist authors.

[40] Tolkāppiyam: Poruḷatikāram, 461 com. The Tuṇaṅkai dance is described by TL as "A kind of dance in which the arms bent at the elbows are made to strike against the sides".

[41] Out of the five recognized Mahākāvyas three are preserved, viz. Cilappatikāram, Maṇimēkalai and Jīvaka Cintāmaṇi.

about a divine being living in the forest and appearing as a beautiful woman, who bars the way of the travellers without doing them any harm. Kōvalaṉ and his wife proceed on their route, and when Kaṇṇaki, who is tired of walking, sits down to rest, Kōvalaṉ makes his way to a water tank to quench his thirst. Just then the Forest Spirit stands in front of him as a young woman full of amorous desire. She has the flowers of spring in her hair, and trembling like the stalk of a flower, she falls at Kōvalaṉ's feet weeping. Kōvalaṉ, however, has been warned beforehand and has been taught a Mantra by the sage, which makes him able to see through the behaviour of the beautiful woman. She recognizes the Mantra as given by "the woman who rides on a stag" (lexicon: Durgā) and says: "My power is restricted. Go now!" and goes away herself.[43]

There is yet another expression which may indicate the mocking character of the Forest Spirit, Kāṭukiḷāḷveyil, literally "the sunlight of the Forest Spirit". The TL explains it as "refracted light at sunset" and gives a reference to Cilappaatikāram 4, 5. There is a description of the conditions prevailing between the rule of the sun and the moon respectively, i.e. dusk, although this word is not used. The dim light and the false brightness over the treetops, when the sun has already set, is the background for the acting of the Forest Spirit. She cannot be trusted.

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[43] Cilappatikāram by Ilankovati ed. with a commentary by Vencatacami Nattar, Madras, (1942) 1950, Kāṭukāṉ Kātai, vss. 140–200, pp. 269–273. Comp. Shilappadikaram (ou le Dit de l'anneau), published through Unesco, Gallimard, Paris, 1957.

The Origin and Development of Barter Trade

S. SINGARAVELU

The practice of exchanging goods for goods is regarded as a *stage* in the development of economic relations. That is to say, among the earliest people there was *not* the practice of exchanging goods for goods, or what is known as 'pure barter', but there was the practice of making gifts on a reciprocal basis. Some of the gifts would seem to have been somewhat instinctive as in the giving of food and drink to guests and strangers. In the Tamil language, the term *viruntu* (விருந்து) which connotes in modern usage a sumptuous feast given to friends and relatives, signified originally the hospitality offered to wayfarers, and its primitive sense was *newness*, and the derivative, *viruntinar* (விருந்தினர்) therefore signified literally *newcomers* or *strangers*.[1] Some of the gifts were also religious in nature as in offerings to the deities,[2] made with the aim of obtaining some benefits or blessings in return. Some other gifts were simply social for the purpose of facilitating both formal and informal relations among people of diverse or of the same origin. Whatever the forms which the early practice of giving gifts assumed, it is significant to note that the early practice of making gifts of food on a reciprocal basis among the ancient Tamil people, would seem to have survived to this day in the form of a taboo which forbids a Tamil householder to return an empty vessel or utensil to another householder who had sent some food in it as gift; instead, the recipient of such gifts is expected to send some food in turn, and if he has no cooked-food to send, he should at least send

1 R. P. Sethu Pillai, *Words and their Significance*, p. 53.

2 *Porunarāṟṟupadai*, 182–4; *Tirumurugāṟṟupadai*, 232–4; *Perumpāṇāṟṟupadai*, 104–5; *Maduraikkāñji*, 456–460.

a handful of some food-grains like rice. The modern custom of giving special gifts to friends on important occasions would also seem to be a continuation of the ancient practice of exchanging gifts on a reciprocal basis.

As for the practice of giving gifts of food, there are a number of references in the classical Tamil poetry, especially those poems dealing with the early chieftains and rulers, to the large-scale provision of food and drink, which were served by the chieftains of various regions to the bardic troupes and their members who frequently stopped at the chieftains' prosperous settlements in the course of their travels from place to place obviously in search of food and new patrons. On those occasions of grand feasts, the bards and their associates are known to have been fed rather sumptuously with large amount of cooked rice (பெருஞ் சோறு)[3] together with meat dripping with fat and also a great quantity of drink which poured like rain ("மழை பெய் மருளும் மகிழ்செய் மாடத்து")[4] for a number of days. A vivid account of such overwhelming hospitality is given by the bard, Mudathamakanniar in the *Porunararrupadai* in which he says :

> "The morning star arose and widely spread its rays in the thick darkness of the morning. The king wished to treat me as friend and welcomed me so as to make me wish to ask him always for hospitality and thus give him a chance to do his bounteous deeds. He placed me near him so that he might keep me in sight. He looked at me with longing eyes......
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> The smiling maids poured out repeatedly from golden vessels much stupefying drink like the cheering rain......Inviting urgently, the king welcomed us. And after having completed the formalities, in due course he asked us more than once, to eat the

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3 *Purananuru*, 177: 13-15; 235: 1-6; 216: 2-3.
4 *Porunarārrupadai*, 84.

well-cooked haunches of rams. We ate this meat by changing it from one side of the mouth to the other (probably because of getting tired on one side) and we were cloyed by eating much....My teeth quite lost their edges because of eating much meat.... One day, we gently said, 'O Renowned King, we wish to return to our settlements'. The king was vexed, and asked with seeming angry look, 'Would you in haste give up this bounteous food?' Yet, he gave us elephants and calves as gifts......that were worth according to his means".[5]

Such hospitality or feast which was its manifestation was indeed the custom of accommodating guests or strangers who were in need of shelter, food, and protection. Among the early Tamil people, such hospitality was found in a pronounced form among agriculturists *(வேளாளர்)* probably because of the abundance of food-grains like paddy rice that were available for their own consumption as well as the consumption of other people.[6]

Although such hospitality might have been due to a spontaneous feeling of sympathy for strangers, it would also seem to have been regulated by certain other factors such as fear of a stranger who appeared as the bearer of magic powers and perhaps certain mystical attributes, or the desire to achieve importance by the display of one's own wealth, or the desire to hear and exchange news of other regions, and the most important of all, the need of articles of trade from other regions.

On occasions of such great hospitality, the bard, because of his important role as leader of the visiting troupe, is known to have been the centre of attention. *("கண்ணிற் காணா நண்ணுவழி இரீஇப், பருகுவன்ன வருகா நோக்கமொடு")*[7] The main reason why the bard alone was treated

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5 *Porunarāṟṟupaḍai*, 71-130.

6 "Vēlānmai which denotes cultivation has acquired the sense of hospitality."—R. P. Sethu Pillai, *Words and their Significance*, p. 11.

7 *Porunarāṟṟupaḍai*, 76-77.

with so much reverence and respect on the part of the host, might perhaps be attributed to the fact that the bard appeared as the bearer of magic powers and mystical attributes which were so much reminiscent of his predecessor, the shaman. In this connection, one might cite the interpretation with regard to the origin of early Tamil bards and poets in the study entitled *Typology of Ancient Indian Education*,[8] in which the writer has pointed out that the predecessor of the Tamil bard was the shaman who carried out certain multiple social functions such as averting illness, depredations and similar calamities, and also interpreting omens in the earliest communities.[9] The writer further points out that the religious and spiritual functions of the shaman became differentiated as society increased in numbers and cultural complexity. From the shaman developed the priest and the ascetic on the one hand, and the bard, later the poet, and then philosopher on the other. " Though the earliest Tamil poetical anthologies reflect a predominantly bardic and poetic stage of educators, they contain traces of shamanistic functions, which because of the reasons arguing their antiquity, are to be considered survivals and retentions of still earlier stages of culture ".[10] The possibility that the bard, Mudathamakanniar, whose evidence on the sumptuous feast was quoted above, might have been regarded as a bard who was still capable of shamanistic functions, would seem to be implied in his own reference to the manner in which he took care of his bodily health. ("தவஞ் செய் மாக்கள் தம்முடம் பிடாஅது, அதன் பயமெய்திய அளவை மான ")[11]

Another important reason which might have been most instrumental in showering such great hospitality on the bardic troupes, would seem to have been the need of articles

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8 Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, *The Typology of Ancient Indian Education*, in Paedagogica Historica III, 2, Blandijnberg, 1963.

9 *Ibid*, p. 359.

10 *Ibid*, p. 358.

11 *Porunarāṛṛupadai*, 91–92.

of trade which could be obtained through reciprocal exchange of gifts of articles between the members of the visiting troupe and the local people of the chieftain's settlement. Such a reciprocal exchange of gifts might have represented an early form of trade. As to the manner in which the exchange of gifts was carried out, the Tamil bards do not seem to say much except referring to certain formalities which they had to carry out as leader of the visiting troupe on meeting the chieftain [12] and to the food offered by the host to the guests, and gifts given to the bards by the chieftains, probably in recognition and appreciation of their most valuable services in organising their troupes or band and leading their members to the chieftain's region. Or perhaps the exchange of gifts between the members of visiting troupe and the local people of the settlement might not all have been 'visible' to the leader of the visiting troupe. If this is so, such a situation might be said to have a parallel in modern times in the invisible 'tourist' trade in major cities of tourist interest. That is to say, although one might read in the daily newspapers that so many tourists arrived from such and such country at such and such ports, we may not be in a position to know how much shopping was done by the visiting tourists, thereby contributing to the economy of the country visited, unless we have the facility to look at the annual financial statistics which might give details of tourist trade. Similarly in the ancient Tamil country, while the leaders of the visiting troupe, the bards, were exchanging their pleasantries and praises with the chieftains in return for good food and subsequently symbolic gifts like garlands or flower petals made of gold, the members of his troupe which perhaps consisted of ordinary people as well, might have been exchanging gifts of articles on reciprocal basis. And when the time came for the troupes to move on to new settlements or to return to their own settlements, and if their leader or spokesman, namely, the bard should express the wish to go before the exchange of gifts was completed,

12 *Ibid*, 102. "அதன்முறை கழிப்பிய பின்றை:

the chieftain was not very happy, for the reason that if the bard were to leave, he would miss the company and entertainment of the bard, and also for the reason that his subjects might not have all completed the exchange of gifts. Therefore the chieftain who was playing host to the bardic troupe, would rather purposly seem to procrastinate giving his own personal gifts to the bard, and this practice would seem to have evolved into a literary theme *(பரிசில் நீட்டித்தல்)* of Tamil poetic convention in *Puram* poetry. Some of the bards of course expressed annoyance at this calculated delay *(பரிசில் கடாநிலை)*, although they were certain in their own minds that they would receive their gifts from their princely patron. When the proper time came for the departure, that is to say, when all gift transactions were completed to mutual satisfaction, then the chieftain gave elephants as his parting gifts, which must have been very useful to the bardic troupes to move from one place to the other, with members of his troupe following them in search of a new settlement and yet another patron.

This practice of exchanging gifts for purposes of trade which might be described as 'gift-barter', did not last long, for it was soon followed by 'pure barter', i.e. exchange of goods for goods on a purely commercial basis. The bards also might have ceased to act as chief promoters or intermediaries of the 'gift barter', because that role was assumed by individual traders with the development of growing commercial activity.

However, many of the bardic troupes still led a wandering life in search of hospitality. By that time also, some of the bards had relinquished their panegyric and middlemen role and had emerged as "poets of a complex and wealthy stage of society and as persons having authority, scholarship and learning". Some of the bards would also seem to have taken up the occupation of traders. Nevertheless, the remnants of the bardic profession survived, and probably they were the people who are referred to as *iravalar* *(இரவலர்)* in the poems of *Puranānūru* anthology. The term, *iravalar* denoted those who begged for hospitality. But it

should be borne in mind that these persons who were known as *iravalar* were not actually beggars in the modern sense of the term. In fact, it is believed that ancient societies had no beggars and that begging has been a phenomenon closely associated with the emergence of private property. But the fact remains that the wandering bards came to be known as *iravalar* or those who asked for hospitality, and those who extended their hospitality to such persons, were known as their protectors or *puravalar* (புரவலர்). At this stage, begging or requesting hospitality, would seem to have been an honourable act, and the giving of alms which was known as *īhai* (ஈகை) or *kodai* (கொடை) which should perhaps be distinguished from giving gift (பரிசில்), a meritorious deed. The remnants of the bardic profession belonging to this intermediate period who sought hospitality from chieftains and rulers, probably expected their donors to play host to them for a number of days, in keeping with the tradition of the earlier bards who were looked after with great care and affection on account of their usefulness in promoting 'gift-barter'. Probably the kings of this period saw no such need as there were already the traders to conduct the trade, and there were the court minstrels or poets to counsel them on matters of wisdom and learning; nevertheless, since the ruling monarch usually belonged to the long Royal line of kings noted for their munificence and generosity, he too followed the tradition of giving the beseeching bard certain gifts and then quickly turning his attention to other important matters of state. Some of the bards would seem to have been annoyed at this abrupt treatment, and protested in a rather vehement and sarcasting vein by reminding the ruler that they were *not* the descendents of those bards who received their legitimate gifts by virtue of promoting trade. ("வாணிகப் பரிசிலன்லேன்")[13]

With the disintegration of early forms of social organisation, especially after the beginning of the growing commercial activity in urban areas had disturbed the old

13 *Puranānūru*, 208 : 7.

pastoral and agricultural economy, the cases of such begging on the part of surviving bards, would seem to have increased, and this would seem to be evident from the names of some bards like Arisilkiḷar (அரிசில் கிழார்), Ālatturkiḷar (ஆலத்தூர் கிழார்), Āvurkiḷar (ஆவூர் கிழார்), which indicate that they belonged to the groups of impoverished landed proprietors (கிழார்), who had to seek hospitality form patrons, because of the disruption of their earlier occupations.

There was also the belief of giving alms as part of the ritual of religious occasions. Owing to this belief, a great religious value has been placed upon the mendicants and their donors for many centuries now in Tamil country. That is to say, religion would seem to have given sanction to a 'profession' made necessary by social disorganisation. In this connection, it might be noted that the ascetic mendicant and the bardic mendicant, both of whose origin might be traced back to the earliest shaman, came together again as one group of people who happened to live by getting alms under religious sanction.

Development of Pure Barter

The practice of exchanging gifts for gifts on reciprocal basis was mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs. How did this gift-barter develop into 'pure barter?' When people began to consider returning gift for gift, a new stage, namely, 'gift-barter' developed. Probably at first there was no exact notion of equivalents. Perhaps at the earliest stage, it was enough that a goodwill gift be reciprocated by a return gift. The gifts so exchanged had indeed become reciprocal, probably accompanied by some sort of ceremonial. One of the most interesting examples of such gift-barter is so fascinatingly described by the bard, Mudathamakanniar who obviously was witnessing such a gift-barter :

> "Those who have honey and edible roots exchange them for the oil of fish and for deer flesh......
>
> The fisherfolk sing hillmen's songs, while the hillmen wear garlands of fragrant blooms of the coast.....

The pastoral dwellers sing the songs of those in fertile lands, and they in turn praise forest lands where the blue *mullai* grows."

"தேனெய்யொடு கிழங்குமாறியோர்
மீனெய்யோடு நறவுமறுகவும்
தீங்கரும்போ டவல்வகுத்தோர்
மான் குறையொடு மதுமறுகவும்
குறிஞ்சி பரதவர் பாடநெய்தல்
நறும் பூங்கண்ணி குறவர் சூடக்
கானவர் மருதம் பாட அகவர்
நீனிற முல்லைப் பஃறிணை நுவல" [14]

It is perhaps significant to note from the passage quoted above that ceremony and singing, and even exchanging of garlands were closely intertwined with the exchange of gifts of food. The garlands that were exchanged in this instance, were probably the forerunners of those garlands of lotus blooms made of gold, and of the necklaces of white, shining pearls which the early bard (பாணன்) and the bardess (பாடினி) respectively received as gifts [15] in recognition of their services of promoting such gift-barter.

What is more significant in this instance of exchanging gifts accompanied by exchange of garlands, is the fact that along with the social intercourse of gift-barter, went a dawning sense of objective values. The garlands made of ordinary blooms were valued in themselves, in so far as they were worn as symbols, or as the mere possession of them gave the people certain distinction. This concept of objective value coupled with the fact that gold was used among the early Tamil people for ornaments long before the days of money, might have been responsible for the tradition of ancient Tamil chieftains and rulers giving away gifts of gold ornaments to be used probably as the most common media of exchange by the bards in the course of their travels.

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14 *Porunarāṛṛupadai*, 214-221.

15 *Porunarāṛṛupadai*, 159-162; *Perumpāṇāṛṛupadai*, 485-6; *Puranānūṛu*, 50: 4; 126: 2-3; 141: 1.

When ornaments made of gold thus became capital, the prestige that accrued from wearing them must have increased, and therefore they were strung together and made into a garland of gold coins by the local goldsmith and worn mainly by women.

> " ஆசில் கம்மியன் மாசறப் புனைந்த
> பொலஞ்செய் பல்காசணிந்த. . ."—புறம். 353:1-2.

Now, coming back to barter and its development, the pure barter would seem to have finally come upon the scene as an exchange of goods with a developing sense of *equivalents,* not merely of good intentions but of *commodities.* Closely connected with the gift-barter in the ancient Tamil country was the open barter of goods. Thus one potful of kumiss was worth one identical basketful of paddy or deer meat, or fish or even certain pulses such as *perum-payaru (பெரும்பயறு).* Such a system of open barter[16] is mentioned in a poem of Puranānūru collection :

> " . . . . வேட்டுவன்
> மான்றசை சொரிந்த வட்டியுமாய் மகள்
> தயிர்கொடு வந்த தசும்பு நிறைய
> ஏரின் வாழ்நர் பேரிலரிவையர்
> குளக்கீழ் விளைந்த களக்கொள் வெண்ணெல்
> முகந்தனர் கொடுப்ப உகந்தனர் பெயரும்"
> —புறம். 33 : 1-6.

The existence of this kind of 'open barter' as an intermediate stage between gift-barter and money economy, presupposes the evolution of a single commodity, or ideally at first two important commodities into common measures of value for other commodities, before they were generally used as media of exchange. This single commodity or the two commodities which have been recognised for their instrinsic value as chief measures of value in the monetary systems of several countries in the world, have been either gold bullion or silver, or both. Although gold was used among the early

16 See also *Ainguruniiru,* 47 : 1-3 ; 48 ; 1-3.

Tamils long before the days of money-economy, somehow it did not attain the position of the medium of exchange in the transitional period when open-barter was giving way to money exchange. According to some evidence that we have in the classical Tamil poetry, there was not one commodity, but there were indeed two commodities that were regarded as important and common measures of value in barter transactions. These commodities were the paddy and the salt.

Of all the important food-stuffs in their natural state, perhaps paddy and salt were best adapted to storage and commerce, and therefore suitable as common measures of value, because of their comparatively non-perishable nature.

As for paddy, one of the very important social benefit which was rather indirectly conferred by irrigation in early Tamil agriculture, was the paddy that came to be used as medium of exchange. That is to say, when irrigation and improved methods of cultivation produced *surplus* crops, a medium of exchange was provided.

As for salt, although it is at present considered an absolute necessity of human food, it would seem to have been used in the early days by people living only in certain regions who had reached a rather advanced stage of culture as a result of changes in living and food conditions. For example, people living largely on meat do not seem to have used any additional salt in their food *("உப்பிலாஅ வவிப் புழுக் கல்")*,[17] simply because the meats themselves supplied a maximum of salt. However, as meat gave way to vegetables, additional salt became more and more necessary, as vegetable foods ranked far lower in salt content, the cereal rice lowest of all. Salt needs therefore increased with each move from the hill towards the plains. The growing use of salt was thus bound up with the shifts of people from montane region where they could live on meat without salt, through the arid region where the people would seem to have felt the

17 *Purananuru*, 363: 12.

need for salt[18] which was not available except in natural brines issuing from underground sources, and through the pastoral to agricultural and maritime civilization.

On account of these reasons, the two commodities, paddy and salt, assumed a great deal of importance in barter transactions, and gradually attained the importance as common measures of value. In view of this common recognition, it was customary in the settlements of ancient Tamil country for trader to announce openly that paddy was equivalent to salt in value.[19]

> " கதழ்கோல் உமணர் காதல் மடமகள்
> சில்கோல் எவ்வளை தெளிர்ப்ப வீசி
> நெல்லின் நேரே வெண்கல் உப்பெனச்
> சேரி விலைமாறு கூறலின் "—அகம். 140 : 5-8.

Finally one might conclude this brief account of the origin and development of barter in the ancient Tamil country, by drawing attention to the fact that paddy and salt would also seem to have been given as wage for work done; thus the terms *kōōly* (கூலி), and *sambalam* (சம்பளம்), meaning 'wage' or 'salary', are said to have been derived from *kōōlam* (கூலம், food-grains), and *sambu* (சம்பு), a high quality paddy, and *alam* (அளம் salt), respectively. The English word, 'salary', is also said to have been derived from the Latin root, '*Sal*' meaning 'salt'.

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18 *Sirurāṇāṛṛupadai*, 137. "குப்பை வேளை யுப்பிளி வெந்தை"
Perumpāṇāṛṛupadai, 97-8. "நெடுங்கிணற்று வல்லூற்று உவரி தோண்டி'

19 *Ahanānūru*, 140: 5-8; see also, *Ahanānūru*, 390: 8-9.

Patterns of Early Tamil Marriages

M. E. MANICKAVASAGOM

0.0. The purpose of this paper is two-fold: to demonstrate the possibility of formulating a workable method, that can be operated in cultural investigations based on literary materials, and to attempt a classification of the systems of marriages which prevailed among the ancient Tamils.

0.1. The pre-historic period in the history and culture of a society is reconstructed from various sources: viz. archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics and literature.[1] Literature, as such cannot be fully relied upon, though in the absence of other sources of information, the importance of literature looms large. Literature is the outcome of the happy blending of so many factors, of which sociological information forms only a part and that too, a small part. Myth and legend, tradition and convention (indigenous as well as foreign), poetic liberty and imagination, idealism and hyperbolism and the like interact in the production of literary works. Moreover, the authors, who are creative artists, have no obligation to depict faithfully and comprehensively, whatever is happening around them. Though an author is a member of the society and is a product of his environment, he is above all a free thinker with prerogatives to dwell upon his imagination and idealism, as he is not producing a historical or sociological document.[2]

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1 Warren and Wellock: THEORY OF LITERATURE (Reprinted 1961) London.

'Indeed this has been one of the earliest uses to which literature has been put by systematic students'.

2 Ibid. 'Literature is no substitute for sociology or Politics. It has its own justification and aim'.

0.2. Thus the problem of adding literature as an evidence for reconstruction is not new.[3] A few of the procedures so far adopted in reconstruction resemble the comparative method. Meyers,[4] for example, suggests a comparison of literature with blundered folk tale commentary, while Bruce Biggs has compared the various literary accounts, to find out the relative genuineness of the accounts.

It is quite possible to utilize literature for sociological inference, with caution. Any approach in this direction should satisfy at least two criteria : First of all the details of culture traits collected from the literary sources should be confirmed, and secondly the method should provide evidence for filling up the lacunae in the picture of the society and culture constructed from literature. The procedure of reconstruction adopted in linguistics and biology can suggest a way for the achievement of these ends. This procedure can be illustrated with an example : let four or five species have originated from a common genus, which is now extinct. What we know now is only the characteristics of the species. All the species have certain common characteristics, and these can be considered as the inherited qualities from the genus, while the peculiar qualities of each species are later individual accretions. Now we can reconstruct a hypothetical genus on the basis of the common characteristics of the species. In a good number of cases, it has been proved to be a near accurate one. An analogous procedure can be extended to culture studies.

0.3. The genus is purely reconstructed on the basis of the common qualities of the species, in the above cited illustration. But in the domain of culture studies based on

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3 Bruce Biggs: MAORI MARRIAGE (1960) Wellington, Newzeland. The method of Biggs is akin to that of Textual Criticism.

4 A. C. Meyers & others: ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CLASSICS (1927) London.

"For Herodotus, too, the first duty of anthropology is to interpret his picture of mankind, to illustrate by parallel cases; to extract by comparison the genuine observation from the blundered folk-tale commentary to fill the blanks in the picture itself with such fragments of fifth century knowledge as have been preserved in other hands in this".

literary documents, we have an added advantage. The ancient phase of the culture to be reconstructed (analogous to the genus) is having at least an incomplete shape, which will be constructed from the literary documents. The modern phase of the culture (analogous to the species) is used only to confirm the literary evidences and to fill up the lacunae and to reduce poetic idealism and hyperbolism to the minimum. In other words, parallel culture traits of the two phases—the ancient one collected from literature and the modern one as seen and observed in the contemporary society—are compared and synchronized. Others also have accepted the validity of this method.[5]

0.4. There are a few attempts on the institution of marriage as it existed in ancient Tamilakam. While Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai [6] deals with ceremonial aspects of the institution, Dr. Subramoniam [7] classifies it. This study is an extension of the latter's treatment, and attempts at the reconstruction of the ancient patterns of marriage. The *Eṭṭuttokai* and the *Pattuppaaṭṭu,* the earliest extant literary works in Tamil have several references to this subject matter and the corpus for this analysis, is mainly based on them. We can observe five forms of marriages among the ancient Tamils : the romantic pattern, the bride-price pattern, the pattern of securing a bride by attaining success in a fight, the pattern of selecting the groom by conducting a bull fight competition, and the pattern of second marriage by paying bride price during the life time of the first wife, but having no issue. The question confronting us, is whether these patterns as gleaned from literature did exist really in the ancient phase of the culture of the Tamils ?

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5 See Bruce Biggs (1961).

'The persistence of indigenous cultural features in contemporary (Maori) society will be a source likely to confirm or refute evidence from the past. If, for instance, documentary materials suggests that the quarelling between the families was part of the pattern of weddings, and if it is found that this is also typical of contemporary weddings, this fact will confirm the documentary evidence'.

6 S. Vaiyapuri Pillai : KAAVIYA KAALAM (1957).

7 V. I. Subramoniam : PANTAI TAMILAR MANAI VALKAI in Kurunci pongal issue : (1963).

0.5. Let us examine these patterns in some detail, prior to arriving at any decision regarding the veracity of the account. The romantic courtship culminating in the consecration of the marriage either with or without elopement, is by far the mostly referred to pattern in the different literary works. In this pattern, elopement takes place only when the consent of the parents happens to be difficult to secure.

In spite of the precautionary steps taken by the mothers, who used to guard their girls from going out (*Aham* : 90, 150, 252, 255 etc.), there were ample opportunities for the intermingling of the younger generations of the two sexes. Either in the river where they enjoyed themselves in swimming and such other sports (*Aink* : 69, 72, 77, *Pur* : 63, *Narr* : 9 etc.) or in the orchards and sand-mounts, where the young ladies used to play in the company of their equals (*Aham* : 135, 153) they (the lovers) had the opportunity to meet and develop their affectionate ties. The millet fields also served as suitable places for such meetings of lovers. Among the people, there existed the custom of sending girls to look after the millet fields, (*Kurinji Paattu* : *Patirr* : 78).

The romantic pairs never liked to expose themselves to gossip, and therefore met always in orchards and out of the way places (*Aham* : 400). The lover used to bestow presentations to his lady-love, gifts like leafy garment, and garlands, bracelets and other costly gifts (*Kur* : 214, *Narr* : 80 and 300 respectively). The girls kept those of gifts in secret possession, for they had the fear of their clandestine love being revealed because of those articles (*Narr* : 359). The custom of making vows to their sweet-hearts and sending messengers to their lady-loves were in vogue with the lovers (*Kur* :238 and *Kali* : 28, 32, 36). When the romantic relationship between the lovers was sealed with the consent of the parents, marriage would take place in the bride's house (*Kali* : 41), the auspicious day for the wedding being the day on which the moon and the asterism Rohini conjoins (*Aham* : 86 and 136) with the usual ceremonial rituals

connected with the function.[8] Sometimes the lovers alone took part in their wedding ceremony done on the river side (*Kur* : 25). The lover had to pay a bride price under certain conditions to get the hand of his lady-love in wedlock. The lovers would elope to get themselves married, when they were sure, that they could not get the consent and approval of their parents (*Ahum* : 145, 195, *Kur* : 7, *Narr* : 66, *Kali* : 9, *Patirr* : 30 etc.). The lovers used to go in chariots, if they eloped during the night, (*Narr* : 149) and they were to be ready to move through the arid tracts (*Narr* : 66). The girl who eloped with her lover left her articles like anklets and balls to fall within the scope of her mother's sight, on seeing which she would weep, (*Narr* : 12), while her brothers got angry and took to arms (*Aham* : 259). During the course of their elopement, the girl would have removed her anklets, so that the bypassers who might come across them should not suspect them (*Aham* : 32) and (it seems that removal of the anklet is the sign of being married). It appears that elopement was not considered as a serious offence. But it might have been liked or disliked by the people. As the couple who had eloped and subsequently married was accorded a cordial reception in the bride's residence, this would indicate the tolerant outlook of the people towards elopement. The walls of the house were painted with red earth, the front yard was decorated with garlands, and sand was spread, for the reception to be held in honour of the newly-weds, though they did it subsequent to their elopement and everything was done with happiness and joy (*Aham* : 195). This account well indicates the wide prevalance of the pattern in ancient Tamiḷakam. It has the maximum frequency of occurrence in the literary works.

0.6. A second pattern of obtaining a bride was wife purchase. Probably in recognition of the economic aspect of marriage, the bridegroom had to pay a price for the bride, to her parents. Either in the form of ornaments, wealth or hamlets, he had to pay to secure the hand of a

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8 S. Vaiyapuri Pillai: KAAVIYA KAALAM.

girl (*Aham* : 90). At times, parents rejected the bride-price because of their unwillingness to give their daughter in marriage to that particular man (*Pur* : 343). The bride-price need not always be in the form of articles. It could also be in the nature of doing certain service to the future father-in-law. He did all kinds of work, even if they happened to be hard and difficult. The young man went on floats into the sea to transport salt bags of his future father-in-law. The pattern of bride-purchase reviewed above stresses the importance of the part played by women in the economic endeavours in the society, (*Aham* : 280). This also provides scope for the bride's father to know the groom intimately.

The marital connections between members of the royal houses and the commoners find expression in the literary works. A ruler desirous of marrying a girl of common origin, would demand the parents of the girl and if the latter conceded, marriage would take place (*Pur* : 340). Some parents rejected such imperious demands and would consent only if begged for. This might have led to rivalries between the rulers and commoners culminating in an open fight, the success of which decided the matter (*Pur* : 336, 337, 341, 342 etc.). The antipathy on the part of the commoners to such unions also might have led to such fights. In order to secure the hand of a particular girl, kings fought a pitched battle (*Pur* : 339). A duel between wrestlers as a type of *tuṇṇu-kai* dance occurred in order to attain the hand of a girl in marriage can be inferred from *Kur* : 364. There are altogether 18 instances in *Puranaanuuru*, and *Tol. Puraț-tiṇaiiyal* typologises this pattern as *Makaṭpaar Kaamci* (Sutra : 77).

0.7. Among the shepherds (*aayar* and *potuvar*) of the *mullai* tract, neither of the above mentioned patterns have any significance at all. They had their own particular pattern. The typical pattern of marriage practised by them was to select the heroic and able bridegroom, on the basis of his success in a competition. Ferocious bulls would be

brought in an arena, where the young men of the community tested their fortunes by subduing the ferocious bulls. The successful catcher of the ferocious bull would marry the girl who owned the particular bull. The striking feature of this pattern is that love and romance play a part only after marriage and are not at all the cause of wedlock. The abilities and the courage of the groom are given more prominence than any other factors in deciding the groom for a girl. Except the *mullai* tract songs (*Kali* : 101, 102, 103, 104 etc.) in *Kalittokai,* in no other place in the entire Sangam classics, can one get even a clue to this pattern.

0.8. In the Sangam works, there is an isolated reference about a type of marriage in which the hero had married a second time for the sake of an issue, while the first wife was alive. This one is a legally consecrated second marriage, unlike the large number of instances ascribed to the licentious life led by men in the company of courtesans. Here the first wife herself received the newly weds, as they entered the house. To this end an inference is possible from *Aink* : 292 combined with Naccinaarkkiniyar's commentary to sutra : 172 of *Tol. Karpiyal.* The sutra : 174, *Tol. Karpiyal* also approves of this practice. Here, the hero had to pay bride-price for securing the hand of the girl in marriage, but this cannot be brought within the pattern of bride-price, as it could happen only under the special circumstance of the first wife having no issue.

0.9. The five patterns discussed above can be arranged in a time scale, on the basis of the 'age—area hypothesis' as follows : except the catching-of-the-bull pattern, rest of the five patterns can be considered as belonging to the same strata. As there are instances of paying bride-price even in the romantic pattern, the two patterns—romantic and the bride-price patterns overlap. Similarly the patterns of bride-price and second marriage overlap, for bride-price is paid to the bride's parents in the two cases. Thus a chain of interrelation can be maintained among the romantic, bride-price and second marriage patterns of marriage and hence their membership in the same strata. The fight as a criterian in

deciding the marriage partners belongs to a special social strata, as this pattern comes into the picture only when the bridge-groom happens to be a member of a royal family. So in the time scale this pattern cannot be pushed forward or backward. Inference to the system of bride-price is possible in this pattern also. But one cannot group the bull conquest pattern with the rest. This is due to the fact that this pattern prevailed in a particular class of the community and that too in a single text : *Kalittokai.*

We get a rounded picture of the institution of marriage in the foregoing paragraphs. The institution of marriage is divided into five patterns and now the question confronting us is 'whether the above account be conceived as complete and faithful'. The question can be answered only after synchronizing these patterns gleaned from literature with that prevailing in the modern phase of the culture to establish the validity of the classical patterns of weddings.

1.0.0. The marriage patterns in the modern society differ from community to community and from place to place. The romantic pattern is no longer a social dogma. In the modern society, the judgments of the people are full of aversion to the romantic pattern, though it exists at least rarely in almost all the communities. But the conditions are different among the hill tribes. The romantic pattern is in vogue among the Mutuvans and Kana Pulayans of Kerala.[9] Among the Mutuvans, 'after the marriage is settled, the bridegroom takes away the maiden when she goes out for water or firewood, and lives with her separately for a few days in some secluded part of the forest. Either they themselves return home or are searched out to bring them home to solemnize the marriage'. Sometimes this habit of bride capture ends in open rivalries and clash between the parties concerned. Among the Kana Pulayans love and romance tend to effect marriage, with or without elopement. In the marriage rituals, a mock fight on the previous day of

9 L A Krishna Iyer: TRAVANCORE CASTES AND TRIBES in 3 Vols

the wedding is a custom among the Southern Pulayas. The groom and his party arrives in the bride's house, a day earlier and on that day a mock fight will be waged, the quorum for the fight being fixed as eight.

1.0.1. Today instead of bride-price, in most cases the reverse is the practice : the groom demands huge sums of money and wealth from the bride's father. He too willingly gives them so as to get better husbands for the girls. But this has nothing to be compared with the ancient bride-price. They are poles apart. At least as a relic of the past, the custom survives in a few communities and hill tribes. In several communities[10] there is what is called a betrothal ceremony, when the groom has to give a costly ornament and clothes to the bride. Among the *cemkumtavar* and *paṭayaacci* castes of the Tanjore and the Arcot districts,[11] on the day of marriage settlement, the groom has to give a stipulated sum of money wrapped in a silk ; failure to pay the amount will mean that the settlement will be invalid. Such a system called '*moippaṇam koṭuttal*' is in vogue among these communities. In Kerala, the payment of bride-price is found among the *Malaveṭans*, the *Malamkuravans*, the *Taṇṭappulayas* and the *Malapulayas*.[12] The practice of serving the future father-in-law, as a means to secure a bride, is widely prevailing among the *Paḷiyans* and *Vaḷḷuvappulayas*. When the purchaser is too poor to pay the bride-price, he enters the father-in-law's house as a suitor-servant and after earning a good name by his service to the old man, marriage will take place.

1.0.2. Second marriages are now rare, even if the first wife has no issue, as it has been prohibited by punishment

10 This practice exists among the members of the *Vellalar*, *Vanikar*, *Veelaar* (potter) and a few other castes in the Kanyakumari and the neighbouring Tirunelveli Districts. Even among the Christians of the locality, the custom of presenting a ring on this occasion is in vogue.

11 Information from a student friend belonging to the area and one of the communities : N. Ramalingom.

12 L. A. Krishna Iyer and L. K. Bala Ratnam : ANTHROPOLOGY IN INDIA—(1961) Bombay.

under law. Despite these restrictions, the practice is seen in modern society. But prior to the prohibition by law, men used to marry a second time when their first wives had no issues.

1.0.3. Thus we can see marriage systems in contemporary society retaining the core of ancient patterns. The four patterns—romantic type, the bride-price type, the type where the groom is decided as a result of a fight, and the second marriage while the first wife is alive—as gleaned from literature have synchronic parallel traits in the modern phase of the culture. The latter confirm the literary sources as valid. The pattern of catching the bull needs confirmation. In no community at the present day, this pattern is in actual existence, but later literary sources, folk songs and traditions preserved in novels maintain the pattern as a meaningful system. Though not as a sport for bridegroom selection, the system of subduing the bull is retained as a pastime in some parts of Madurai and Ramnad districts. A guess that this pattern of marriage by bull fight competition was not a literary convention but an actual fact, will not be off the mark.

1.0.4. Thus this method provides a corrective and confirmative picture of the ancient phase of the culture, the evidences for which have been collected from literature.

Tamil in Synchrony and Diachrony

KAMIL ZVELEBIL

0.1. The real state of affairs in any language community is always much more *complicated* than any description may reflect. Any contemporary major language is a phenomenon of immense complexity, at once homogenous and heterogenous, a complex macrosystem including systems of smaller volume, and the problems, concerning the structure of a major language as a whole, as an immensely complex supermacrosystem, belong to the most fascinating, most important and most neglected fields of contemporary linguistics.

0.2. We would naturally like to deal with this complex macrosystem as adequately as possible. Whereas the techniques of analysis may be improved greatly by the mechanization of research procedures and by automatic linguistic analysis, we need a theoretical and methodical approach to the complex macrosystem of systems—if only for the task of providing a corresponding algorithm for an automatic analysis.

Since language is a *complex* phonemonenon, complex primarily in *space* as well as in *time* (though there are yet other important coordinates than the space-time coordinates pertaining to language), what we need is a system of *complex* investigation, a complex approach. Now this notion of language as being complex in space and time and as being primarily a vehicle of communication should, I suppose, underlie all our attempts at solving the intricate problems of Tamil linguistics of today, just as it underlies the very title of this paper—Tamil in Synchrony and Diachrony. When I say "Tamil today" I have in mind not only the literary language, nor the substandard dialectal language

alone, nor the common spoken Gemeinsprache—but the most *inclusive* and *complex hypermacrosystem* which may be viewed projected in *space* and *time*.

The conceptual framework of this approach toward Tamil may be found, on the one hand, in the teaching of the American linguist Prof. Kenneth L. Pike in his view of language as particle, wave and field, and, on the other hand, in the ideas held by Prof. Avanesov, a most prominent Soviet dialectologist.

0.3. According to Pike, language may be viewed profitably from three standpoints : one views language as made up of *particles* in hierarchy ; the second, as made up of *waves of events* ; a third consists in viewing structure as a *total field*. For our approach to Tamil in its synchronic and diachronic complexity, all three views are needed, one supplementing the other. On a purely descriptive level when dealing with a mere synchronic description of a particular microsystem with *space and time excluded* (say with the idiolect of one informant, or with the language of one particular text) we may well use the *static*, purely *structural* view of language as made up of *particles*—phonemes and allophones, morphemes and allomorphs, tagmemes and allotagmas etc.

As soon as we include, however, *space OR time* into the picture, studying horizontal or vertical *topoisoglosses* and *topoheteroglosses* (space included) or chronoisoglosses (chronoheteroglosses, time included), the particle view of language is insufficient and unsatisfactory. *Change* over a period of time or over a geographical area can be rather described through fusion stages taking part between systems in time and space which act in some sense as waves with identifiable components. Thus the dynamics of change in time OR space is the dynamics of waves of movement of one system to another system, the language is viewed as made up of waves of movement merging one into another with intermediate indeterminate areas between. In other words,

linguistic geography (with time excluded and space included) and *linguistic chronography* (with space excluded and time included) need the view of language as made up of *waves*.

Finally, as soon as I include BOTH *space* AND *time* into the study of a total linguistic hypermacrosystem, even the wave view of language is insufficient. The whole dynamic potential or structure of the system should be viewed as a *field*. In that discipline of linguistics which deals with the *chronotopoisoglosses* of language as the means of communication changing in time AND space—in *linguistic chronogeography*—it is necessary to view language as *functional*, as a system with parts and classes of parts so interrelated that no parts occur apart from their function in the total whole, in the field—which in turn occurs only as the product of these parts in functional relation to a *social* and *cultural environment*.

0.4. Thus the most inclusive and most adequate investigation of the most inclusive macrosystem should be the study of the *polychronous* and *polytopic* supermacrosystem with *time* and *space*, *style* and *situation* and *social position included*. This supermacrosystem should be described in terms of horizontal and vertical, stylistically relevant *chronotopoisoglosses*.

Tamil is a language which typically *needs* this kind of complex approach. It still has a number of local, territorial dialects, it still has diversities correlating with distinctions of social position and community-hierarchy, it has got important style distinctions, it has role and situation distinctions, it is a "unity in diversity" split horizontally and vertically. Just listen to this: *oruvar piranta tālūkā, jillā,* ***avaratu kulam,*** *kōttiram,* ***tolil,*** *poruṇilai eṉṉum ivaṟṟai avaratu moḻiyiṉiṉṟu aṟintukoḷḷukiṟōm.* This is what Swami Vipulananda wrote about 3 decades ago. He was quite right. The object of our study of Tamil in synchrony and diachrony should thus be the most inclusive supermacrosystem in its *time* and *space* projections, Tamil viewed as

variable in time, space, social and community hierarchy, situation and style.

1.1 The first task of Tamil linguistics in near future should be this : *excluding time* and *including space* to establish *topoisoglosses* manifesting different single linguistic features, to model microsystems pertaining to different *spots* in *space*, to model *horizontal territorial macrosystems* as well as *vertical, social, role and style macrosystems,* and finally the structure of dialectal language as a whole : once more I repeat—*time* is *excluded, space included.*

1.2. The establishment of *horizontal topoisoglosses* of various isolated linguistic features in Tamil is just beginning to take shape. The first objective in this direction should be, I suppose, a tentative establishment of diagnostic horizontal topoisoglosses, and I admit that I myself have tried to set up twenty basic features of Tamil vocalism and consonantism which may be used as points of departure in the search for *diagnostic phonoisoglosses.* The items containing these features should be used, on the one hand, in test-sentences and, on the other hand, they should be searched for in primary data. I do not pretend that by setting up these twenty phonetic features I am able to point out all relevant foundations for horizontal phonoisoglosses. But I repeat that each one of those features (a detailed discussion within the limits of this paper is ruled out but I am always prepared for it whenever it will be convenient) is diagnostic, and they may be used as convenient points of departure for the preparation of the first net of phonoisoglosses in Tamil.

1.3. A similar procedure may be worked out for *morphoisoglosses* and so on. Just for the sake of illustration let me quote one example : the 3. p. pl. uyartinai pronoun "they", LT *avarkaḷ* is realized very differently, in many systemically conditioned variants : its phonetic and phonemic shape is certainly to be taken as an important *horizontal* and *vertical* isogloss : Cf. on the horizontal level of local dialects : North, East and partly South Tamil

avanka ; West Tamil *aviya* ; South East *avuha* or *avarhol,* Ceylon *avankal.* Vertically, characteristic for social and caste dialects are especially the forms Br. Tam. *ava* : vs. all Non-Brahmin forms ; *further, koccai avunka,* versus non-koccai *avanka* (common colloquial) ; for role and style difference cf. LT *avarkal* versus CT *avanka.*

1.4. As may be seen even from this single example, instead of including *space* into our considerations of single linguistic features, we may include differences correlating with distinctions in *social* position and *caste*-hierarchy, and or distinctions in *situation* and *style.*

Considering these distinctions, we should establish *vertical topoisoglosses* in Tamil—that is features diagnostic for the position (therefore *topoisoglosses*) of a speaker within the *social hierarchy* (up and down-vertically). I would advocate here to make a distinction between *social* hierarchy proper, and *caste-hierarchy.* It seems that there are some linguistic features in Tamil which are in correlation with the speaker's social position, education, profession etc. irrespective of his position in the caste-system. I think we should stress the fact that the so called " low class " or " vulgar " Tamil is not a caste dialect, not a *community* dialect.

1.5. It seems that one of the most important and most interesting tasks of synchronic dialectology is to set up all diagnostic vertical isoglosses which are characteristic for the *main community dichotomy* in Tamil-*Brahmin* versus *non-Brahmin.* The actual situation is indeed very complicated since Brahmin Tamil forms a vertically delimited macrosystem fairly homogenous when compared with non-Brahmin Tamil, but only relatively so : it is itself a hyper-system of at least two microsystems—Vaishnava Brahmin Tamil and Shaiva Brahmin Tamil. I doubt whether a Shaiva Brahmin would say in a natural conversation e.g. ṭi:rṭon paṇṇi ṭirumaṇṇe eṭuṭṭiṇṭu va:ŋko:, having taken bath bring thiruman. This is typically Vaishnava ; a Shaiva Brahmin would rather say sna:nam paṇṇi vipu:ṭi eṭuṭṭiṇṭu

va:nko : And a non-Brahmin of course kuḷiccitṭu ṭiruni:ru eṭuṭṭukkiṭṭu va:nka.

From this single example it is obvious (without commentary) how important it is to study carefully every single feature which may mark a vertical isogloss. It is, in fact, one of the main tasks ahead of synchronic dialectology in Tamil to set up—apart from *horizontal topoisoglosses covering the entire Tamil territory, vertical topoisoglosses* covering the *entire Tamil speech community,* the entire Tamil *society.* Let me quote one more illustration of a *lexical topoisogloss* : the items for the simple concept of " son " (*filius*).

My own material shows 17 alloforms of this conceptual item, some of them different phonemic or phonetic shapes of the same etymon, some entirely different words—all of them what Pike calls *SYSTEMICALLY conditioned variants :* Cf. one set of differences marking distinctions in role and situation : SLT *makan*—CCT *maken ;* another set—caste-*hierarchy* Brahmin *puḷḷe* vs. non-Brahmin *maken* or *maven.* Social style differences : CCT *maken* versus koccai *maven ;* another chart would provide for horizontal isoglosses : all continental dialects on the one hand show closely related forms like *makken, maven, mayen* (in Pallar Tam.) vs. Ceylon *mo:n.*

1.6. Now most of that which has been just said concerned the topoisoglosses (horizontal as well as vertical) of *single features.* The next step is to *model microsystems* of *different local patois* and horizontal as well as vertical macrosystems of different *territorial* and *regional dialects.* Whereas, when working on isolated isoglosses of isolated features we may be satisfied with the particle view of language, here now, when dealing with *bundles* of isoglosses, with the models of the structure of single dialects and especially with their nuclear versus transitional, critical zones (or bridges), it is convenient to view language as *waves* of movement following one another and merging one into another in a complex macrosystem.

Thus, to sum up, the task of *Tamil language* topography, horizontal and vertical, is to establish local *patois*, subdialects, dialects and dialect regions—horizontal and vertical macrosystems—after having set up carefully selected diagnostic topoisoglosses.

2.0. So far it is possible to divide the entire Tamil language area of continental Tamil and Ceylon (leaving apart Tamil as spoken in Malaysia etc.) very tentatively into *five dialect regions* : North, East, West, South and Ceylon. Each of these big dialect regions is characterised by a fairly thick *bundle* of important *horizontal topoisoglosses*, thus forming a macrosystem of its own. It would be possible to point out some typical features diagnostic for each of these regional macrosystems. Such impressionistic characterization may actually be found in some papers which have dealt with Tamil territorial dialects including such works as Andronov's brochure on spoken Tamil or my own paper *Spoken Language of Tamilnad* which has just appeared in *Archiv Orientalni.* However, I feel, that this stage of impressionistic and superficial descriptions which were perhaps inevitable and even useful a while ago, should now give way to adequate, full and precise descriptions of each one of those local and regional macrosystems ; in other words, we need Tamil language topography—or dialect geography—to become a full-fledged, government-sponsored scientific discipline.

2.1. Here I cannot do more than repeat only one or two general conclusions Tamil dialectology has been so far able to arrive at—First : the *thickest bundle* of *heteroglosses divides* continental Tamil from Ceylon Tamil. Another fairly thick bundle separates Western Dialect Region from the rest. A thinner but important bundle of isoglosses encircles the Southern Dialect Region. The North and the East are separated from one another only by a few diagnostic heteroglosses. This purely structural and synchronic conclusion is fully supported and to a great extent explained by extra linguistic factors and by historical considerations. Second : An opinion has been expressed several times that

"local dialects are only weakly marked in Tamil". I cannot quite agree with such a statement. Whereas it is true that—when compared e.g. with the differences between Plattdeutsch and Schwyzer Deutsch—the dialect flexion in Tamil is much less marked, it is equally true that the main types of regional dialects—West, South, North plus East, and Ceylon—differ considerably and entitle us to speak about clean-cut dialect regions in Tamilnad. Let me quote a single example chosen at random from my material: a non-Brahmin speaker from Madras has said: (mekka: na:ṭṭu, noreya so:ru kaṭṭikinu ka·ṭṭukku po:na:nka), next day they went to the wood, having tied a bundle full of boiled rice; the same utterance in a South Eastern local dialect of Tamil is transformed into the following systemically conditioned variant: (maruna·ḷe, naraiya co:ru kaṭṭikiṭṭu ka·ṭṭukku po:na:hae).

Most pairs of dialects of Tamil are certainly mutually intelligible, and the index of dialect flexion in the whole set would be probably rather low (like in English or French, and unlike in Chinese e.g.), but, on the other hand, some pairs (e.g. North Arcot and Jaffna) would, I fear, belong rather to an L—complex than to a single L—simplex.

2.2. As far as the *vertical* macrosystems are concerned, we may distinguish among three types of such macrosystems, each delimited by a fairly thick bundle of vertical isoglosses:

1. macrosystems based on *social* and *caste*-hierarchy;
2. macrosystems based on *style* distinctions;
3. macrosystems based on *role* and *situation* distinctions.

2.21. I have already touched upon the problem of speech diversity correlating with social and caste-distinctions. What has just been written about the impressionistic treatment of territorial dialects is equally true of the *social* and *community* dialects of Tamil. A full and adequate description is

a *desideratum*, and, again, this task should be performed by the Tamils themselves, as soon as possible. The diagnostic features of language use are immensely important for the study of the changing pattern of " Hindu society at cross-roads ". Apart from an individual's name, his customs and manners, type of dress, ornaments etc., the most characteristic feature of a person's place in the community hierarchy in South India is his *speech*. Whereas, however, the dress and the other external symptoms including that part of the name which is typical for a community can be and is nowadays usually changed or disposed of (Mr. Subrahmanya Ayyar is just plainly Mr. Subrahmanyam nowadays, and Mr. Sundaram Pillai is just Mr. Sundaram), the speech habits of a person are too intimately tied up with his personality, so intimately and inherently a part of a man's being, that they remain long one's main and perhaps the only diagnostic feature of one's place in the pattern of the communities.

2.22. Contrary to territorial and social dialects, there are distinctions which *coexist* in the speech-habits of a single speaker. Geographical and social dialects tend to be mutually exclusive ; the use of those variations which regularly coexist in the speech of single individuals reflect some kind of *situational* or *role* differences. In Tamil these differences are so deep that the two styles have each its own phonemic, morphophonemic and morphemic systems. In short, Tamil has a clear-cut *dichotomy* between the formal versus the *informal* variety of speech ; the formal variety may be spoken—as in most platform-speeches, in the news-reel of the AIR, in schools and colleges by teachers and professors, on the stage, etc., or written (most literature has been composed in this formal variety) ; this is the *ilakkiyattamiḻ* or *ilakkiyavalakku*, based on *centamiḻ* ; it is called *mēṭaippēccu* when spoken ; or *ceppamāna moḻi* which stresses the fact that it is a polished, grammatical standard ; *eḻuttuttamiḻ* when written ; Swami Vipulananda has called it *puttakattamiḻ*, bookish T. But it is not used by any sector of the Tamil community for ordinary daily conversation.

The informal variety likewise may be spoken and is actually spoken as the common, day-to-day, colloquial, ordinary speech of educated Tamilians, it may also be heard in some plays and films, occasionally in various programmes of the AIR, and by some speakers also in platform speech making (Prof. T. P. M. on Sept. 9, 1962). It may likewise be written—but is usually not. This is the *pēccuttamil* or *pēccuvalakku*, based on a mixture of substandard non-Brahmin dialects of the Central and Northern regions of Tamilnad. I would myself prefer the term *potuppēccuttamil* or simply *potuttam l*—common Tamil. Swami 'Vipulananda calls this variety *uyirttamil* living Tamil.

What is very important is the fact that this Common Colloquial Tamil cannot be identified entirely with any local (or social, or caste) dialect of Tamil ; in other words, CCT is something different from any other speech-type in Tamil. CCT *has its own, specific,* fairly though not quite homogenous, *macrosystem.*

There is no doubt that sooner or later spoken Tamil will, in a modified form, enter the field of creative and later technical writing ; for a period of time, there may be two standards : one, a representative of the traditional culture based on the *centamil* and today's standard written language, the other representing more progressive strata, modern-minded intelligentsia, the middle-classes in towns etc., based on a modified form of today's *potuppēccuvalakku.* First, the gap between the two may be quite wide, gradually, however, the extremes will be moving closer towards the centre which lies in the future, not very distant but not very near either, and the process and growth of colloquial standard will be finished as a conscious process in forming a full-fledged over-all national language of Tamilnad. The process—which is so far spontaneous though moving along objective lines—should be *made* conscious for reasons linguistic as well as cultural, social as well as political ; in other words, it should be the concern of every educated Tamilian to strive after cultivating—apart from cultivating the *literary* language—this *common colloquial* as an equal partner of the

written norm. This leaves us, the Tamilologists, with enormous work ahead: to prepare descriptive and normative grammars, students' grammars, textbooks and dictionaries of the common spoken language.

It cannot be overemphasized that this common spoken standard is *not* the so called vulgar speech, the *koccai* of the uneducated. On the contrary, the common spoken language is used by the educated middle-classes of non-Brahmin descent in big Tamil cities—by those who form nowadays, socially, economically and culturally the most influential strata of Tamil population. I should also like to be well understood on this issue: I do not advocate "the hybrid, anglicized, sanskritized, *manipravala* jargon affected by sections and classes of Madras with their intromission of English phrases and whole sentences ridiculously sandwhiched in Tamil and more ridiculously pronounced" (I quote from Dr. X. S. Thani Nayagam). But I am convinced that the common spoken language, strongly modified under the impact of the best contemporary literary style, will become the over-all national Tamil language of the future. What Dr. Mu. Varadarajan strives after in the written form, I would perhaps suggest as the *model* in the colloquial language in its spoken shape, that is including the necessary phonological and morphophonological changes proper to the spoken variety. And, finally, in the future, a closer *rapprochement* between today's written and today's spoken, on the basis of styles developed by V. Ramaswamy, Tiru Vi Ka and Mu Va.

3.1. So far I was dealing with *monochronous* structure of the dialectal language—practically with those systems—different in space, style or situation—which are *synchronous* with *us*.

The polychronous structure of the dialectal language, with *excluded space* and *included time*—is the object of the historical grammar proper of the language.

Most of you probably know that a historical grammar of the *literary* style of Tamil is now being prepared by myself and my Soviet colleagues and that this work should be ready for print by the end of 1967. Enormous work in this direction in the analysis of the past stages of development of *literary* Tamil is being done by the universities of Annamalai and Kerala, and I have also been (though superficially) informed about the indexes prepared in Pondichery. I should only like to make one suggestion : apart from a historical grammar of the literary style of Tamil we should elaborate a historical grammar of the *spoken* language as a macrosystem developing in time. Material and data for this there is real abundance especially in inscriptions, but also in literary texts, which shows that *diglossia* is a very ancient feature in Tamil, that, practically, the written language, as a system, differed from the spoken, as a system, during all periods of linguistic development.

3.2. Now, as the last step, we may include into our considerations of the supermacrosystem of the dialectal language as a whole *both time and space, simultaneously*. We may view the language in its space and time projections, in the dynamics of its territorial, spatial, and temporal, structural development, in change.

Coming back to Tamil, we may say that our aim should now be the treatment of Tamil in synchrony and diachrony, that is Tamil in terms of horizontal and vertical chronotopoisoglosses, that is, yet in other words, Tamil as a supermacrosystem in the diversity of *space*, *time*, *community*, *situation* and *style projections.*

This may seem just a " grau Theorie " but it is a practical necessity. Anyone who is well acquainted with inscriptional and literary Tamil may quote hundreds of instances showing that this diversity—that is the distinctions between a superposed literary form, a number of spoken local-cum-social dialects, and probably a more-or-less common Gemeinsprache—has been existing in Tamil for many past centuries. Practically in all periods of linguistic develop-

ment (I may quote abundantly from the writings of K. Kanapathi Pillai, Miss Jayakumari, or my own materials etc.) the written language has differed more or less from various forms of the spoken—except perhaps during the comparatively brief span of time when the literary form was arising from the vernacular, when it was just being modified. Because change lies in the nature of language, divergencies must have emerged soon ; conservatism lies in the nature of writing and spelling. Thus we cannot but conclude that diglossia in Tamil had been a very ancient feature, and we should investigate this problem historically with utmost care.

3.3 Another very important question of Tamil chronogeography is the problem *which* local or regional dialect had been the basis of the *literary standard.* In the Historical Tamil Grammar which we prepare in Prague and Moscow we shall try to answer this question. Of an equal importance is the answer to the question which local or regional dialect lies at the bottom and core of the *common colloquial.*

Tentatively I should like to say now this : the core of *Literary Tamil* is the Southern regional dialect of *centamiḻ-nilam* with Madurai as its centre of prestige. Standardized for the first time in the 4th—3rd Cent. B.C., it received its final important norm in the Nannul, and since that it practically ceased to develop in its orthographic and orthoepic norm and grammatical system as such.

The core of the *common colloquial* Tamil, which as a sort of *system* developed much later but which was so to say *in potentia* and *in nuce* existing practically *always*, is the regional dialect of the Eastern-cum-Northern areas in the speech of non-Brahmin middle class literate speakers in the towns and cities of this area.

4. Most of the things which have been said in this paper are a matter of grave practical consequences : upon the solution of problems pertaining to Tamil linguistics in the broadest sense—structural linguistics as well as sociolinguistics, synchronic and diachronic—depend such enormously important matters as e.g. the prognosis and direction

of the future development of Tamil diglossia ; the question of the future over-all national written and spoken language of Tamilnad, etc. The enormous richness of Tamil vocabulary, the absence of one single norm—either literary or spoken—for all speakers of Tamil—these are the sources of great difficulties for foreign learners of Tamil. One of the main difficulties in this respect is the intimate tie-up between style and situation in Tamil ; another, the swiftly changing types of prestige in language use. *Which type* of the spoken, colloquial Tamil should be taught at our universities—which type of speech should be imitated as that which has greatest prestige and is indicative of future trends? What type, what *norm* of Tamil is a *foreigner* expected to speak ? What kind of *literary style* should the student imitate when *writing* Tamil and when speaking formally—that used by Mu Va, or that used by some other speakers? Should he develop his style-habits in the direction indicated by V. Ramaswamy and T. Ke. Chidambaranatha Mudaliyar, or in that followed by Thiru Vi. Ka, or in the direction of *taṉittamil iyakkam* sponsored by such writers as Maraimalai Adigal ? What will be the future over-all national language of Tamilnad ? What about the orthographic and orthoepic norm of the future spoken-cum-written language ?

All these are questions which we must try to answer by our work.

The Island Shrine of Sri Ranganātha

J. M. SOMASUNDARAM

The beautiful island of Srirangam is of universal interest. The shrine of Sri Ranganātha, the glory of Vaishnavism, nestles towards the north of the island, as its Śaivite counter-part, Jambukeśwaram, occupies another part towards its east. The two expansive branches of the Cauvery enclose the island, and they seem almost to garland the island and its two great temples in between. The gopuras rising amidst the rich green foliage and the silvery waters rushing on in the bright sunlight, or on moon-lit nights, are a memory never to be forgotten.

Srirangam island is about 19 miles in length, and in its widest part about 1½ miles broad, the soil being alluvial and very fertile. Srirangam town is situated in lat. 10° 52′ N and 78° 42′ E, and 2½ miles north of the historic city of Tiruchirappalli.

Srirangam is by far the largest of the South Indian temples. Its construction instead of consisting of mainly one effort, as in the case of the Nayak kings at Madurai, and in several of most of the southern temples, has extended over a long period of over eleven centuries. An unusual feature of the place is also that it is laid out from North to South instead of the almost invariable orientation from East to West.

Srirangam is a city within the temple. Srirangam has a population of 41,964 according to the census of 1961. Constituted a municipality in 1871, the town around the temple has grown gradually according to the ancient ideas of town-planning in the *Sīlpa Sāstras*. The *sanctum-sactorum* of Sri Ranganātha has been the nucleus around which the seven enclosures or *prākāras* and the buildings therein

rose as the town emerged and grew into importance by the occupation of first the temple servants, then the Brahmin devotees, then the craftsmen, then the tradesmen and the others who had to cater to the necessaries and luxuries of the inhabitants. The temple and the town are almost conterminous, the greater portion of the houses having been erected inside the walls of the former; and the temple within, the seven outer square *prākāras* or walled streets, several other streets and the greater portion of the dwelling houses.

St. Poikaiār—the earliest of the Ālvārs gives expression to the universal Hindu aspect of the divinities in his inimitable verse :

"பொன் திகழும் மேனிப் புரிசடையம் புண்ணியனும்
நின்றுலகம் தாய நெடுமாலும்—என்றும்
இரு அரங்கத்தால் திரிவ ரேலும் ஒருவன்
ஒருவன் அங்கத்து என்றும் உளன்".

Of the three temples, sacred to Venkateśa at Tirupati, to Varadarāja at Kanchee, and Ranganātha, the Srirangam temple is considered the most sacred to the Vaishnavas; known to them by the distinguished name of the "Koyil" or "The Temple *par-excellence*", as Chidambaram is the one of utmost sanctity, "the koyil" for Saivites. Of the one hundred and eight Vaishnava holy centres (*Nūtreṭṭu Tiruppaṭigal*) in India, Srirangam is considered the foremost as being sung by all the twelve Vaishnava Ālvārs, of the South; and as the scene of the labours and the last resting place of Rāmānuja (1017 to 1137 A.D.); and by its association with all the later Sri Vaishnava ācāryas. The sanctity of the temple draws pilgrims from distant Nepal and Kashmir to Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi—the extreme southern-most point of the peninsula.

Sriranga Mahatmya, the Sthala Purāṇa, which finds mention both in *Garuḍa Purāṇa* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* asserts that those who visit Srirangam, those who bathe in the Cauvery, those who remain there even for a few seconds, and even those who only see it from afar will not only be

free from fear of *Naraka* the abode of Yama—but will be free from disease and agony at the time of death, and also from an untimely death.

Though held to be of remote antiquity, the real beginnings of this magnificent temple is shrouded in mystery. The earliest references to the temple are in the *Rāmāyana* by Valmiki.* The legend is that Sri Ranganātha was in worship of Brahma in Vaikunda, and was brought by King Ikshvāku to his capital at Ayodhyā, and he and his descendants for generations worshipped Him as their family deity, and in course of time, it came to Sri Rāma as a paternal inheritance. After Sri Rāma returned from Lankā and was crowned, Vibhīshaṇa who had followed Rāma to Ayodhyā wished to return to Lankā. During his coronation when Sri Rāma distributed large presents to his adherents, Rāvaṇa's brother Vibhīshaṇa preferred to have for his share Rāma's *Kuladanam*, the family deity which was in the worship of the Ikshvāku kings from time immemorial. The *Uttara-kāṇda* of the *Rāmāyana* refers to this. Rāma when handing over the ancestral deity advised Vibhīshaṇa to reign over his subjects with *Dharma* and to keep in daily worship the family deity presented to him. Vibhīshṇa agreed to obey this mandate and while on ,his way back to Lankā he halted for a bath at noon in the delightful place now known as Srirangam or Chandrapushkarani, depositing the image there. And when Vibhīshaṇa finishing his ablutions attempted to take up the image and resume his onward journey, the deity addressed his *Bhakta* to leave Him alone in that lovely spot and worship Him there only. The incident is perpetuated to this day in the Srirangam temple as Vibhīshaṇa is seen enshrined with *Senai Mudaliar* or Vishvaksena in the second *prākāra* of the temple; and Vibhīshaṇa inaugurates the *Āḍi* and *Panguni Brahmotsava*, participating in the *Ankurārpaṇa* rituals. The genesis of the temple as such is ascribed to Tretā Yuga of Rama's reign. Further

* Valmiki: Yuddha Kāṇda, 128 Sarga. Sloka 90. Uttara Kāṇda 39 Sarga Sloka 14; also Chap. 108, Slokas 27-30.

references as to the beginnings of the principal shrine are also in *Sriranga Mahatmya* in *Dasa Adhyayi* of *Brahmanda Purana* and in the *Sadta adhyayi* of *Garuda Purana* and in other mythological works. But, it should be said, that the inception of the holiest of holies of this sacred temple is ascribed to an age beyond our reach and knowledge.

We have picturesque details of the temple and its deity in the *Silappadikaram* :

> " நீலமேகம் நெடும்பொன், குன்றத்துப்
> பால்விரிந்து அகலாது படிந்தது போல
> ஆயிரம் விரித்தெழு தலையுடை அருந்திறல்
> பாயற்பள்ளிப் பலர்தொழுது ஏத்த
> விரிதிரைக் காவிரி வியன் பெருந் துருத்தித்
> திரு அமர் மார்பன் கிடந்த வண்ணமும் ". (சிலப்பதிகாரம்)

From the third century onwards, the temple is the centre of praise from the heart of the Vaishnavite saints known as *Alvars.* The acāryas commencing from Nathamunigal made Srirangam as their abode and a centre of their activities. The life work of St. Rāmanuja is well known, and the lives and the times of the Alvars and acāryas are well depicted in a religious history known as *Guruparapprabhavam* presented in two versions. And in the McKenize manuscripts, we have several references to the temple, and the *Koyil-olugu,* gives full details of the daily routine of the temple and of the endowments and improvements that have gone into the temple as it is now.

The historic perspective is presented by the Epigraphical department of the Archaeological Survey of India which has copied as many as 353 inscriptions found on its walls• Some of them are published in the *South Indian Inscriptions* Series. Thirteen copper plates have also been examined. They all contain evidence to say that the temple has received the royal benefactions of the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Hoysalas and the Vijayanagar Dynasties; also of princely devotees between the 9th and 16th centuries A.D. The earliest inscriptions go back to the reign of Madurai-konda-

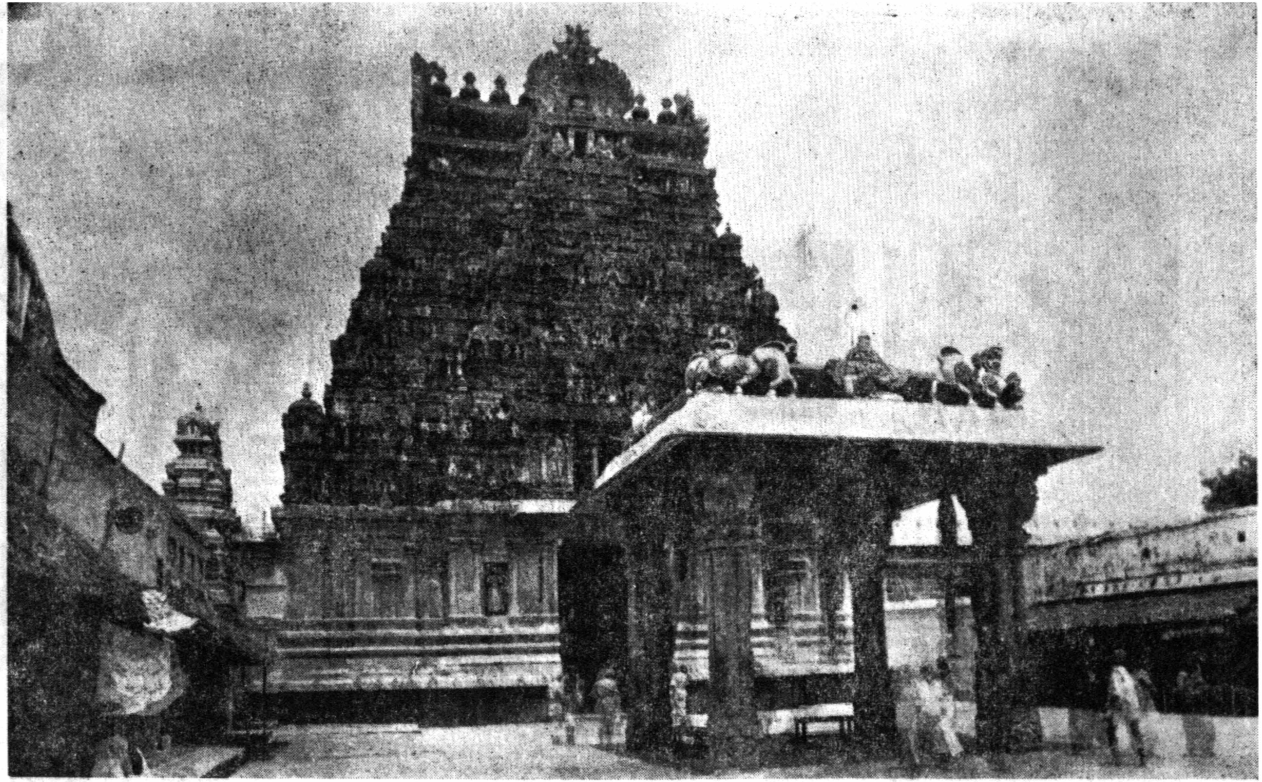
Parakesari-Varman who is Chola Parantaka I (906–46 A.D.). An inscription of Sundara Pandya relates that he took Srirangam from a King, probably Someswara in 1253, after laying waste and plundering the capital of the noted Chieftain Kopperunjinga; and, Sundara is identified as Jatavarman who ascended the throne in A.D. 1250–51. The largest of such contributions were from Jatavarman Sundara Pandya (1251–1271 A.D.), and many of the buildings date from the XVII Century due to the munificence of the later Nayak kings of Madurai who made their second capital at Tiruchirappalli. Jatavarman's two Srirangam inscriptions are published in the *Epigraphis Indica* Vol. III p. 7 ff. The benefactions of Sundara Pandya to the Srirangam temple have been extensive. The *Koyil-Olugu* narrates that the Pandya known as *Pon-Veynda-Perumal-Sundara-Pandya Deva* performed *Tulābhāra* weighing himself on a float, seated full-armed on his caparisoned royal elephant against gold, pearls and precious stones, and with these laid out the four Raja Mahendra streets around the Srirangam temple, built as many as twenty-four *tulapurusha mandapams*, an inner prākāra for the temple with adjoining corridors, Yagaśālā manṭapams, and installed a number of images of highest merit covering them with the nine gems.

He also gifted golden vessels of various descriptions for use to the deity; also endowments for feeding and for the annual car festival, all aggregating to the value of more than eighteen lakhs of gold piece; and another eighteen lakhs for covering the temple vimana and other portions with gold plates. His several acts of piety earned him the name of "*Hemācchādana Raja*" and *Koil-pon-veynda-Perumal*".

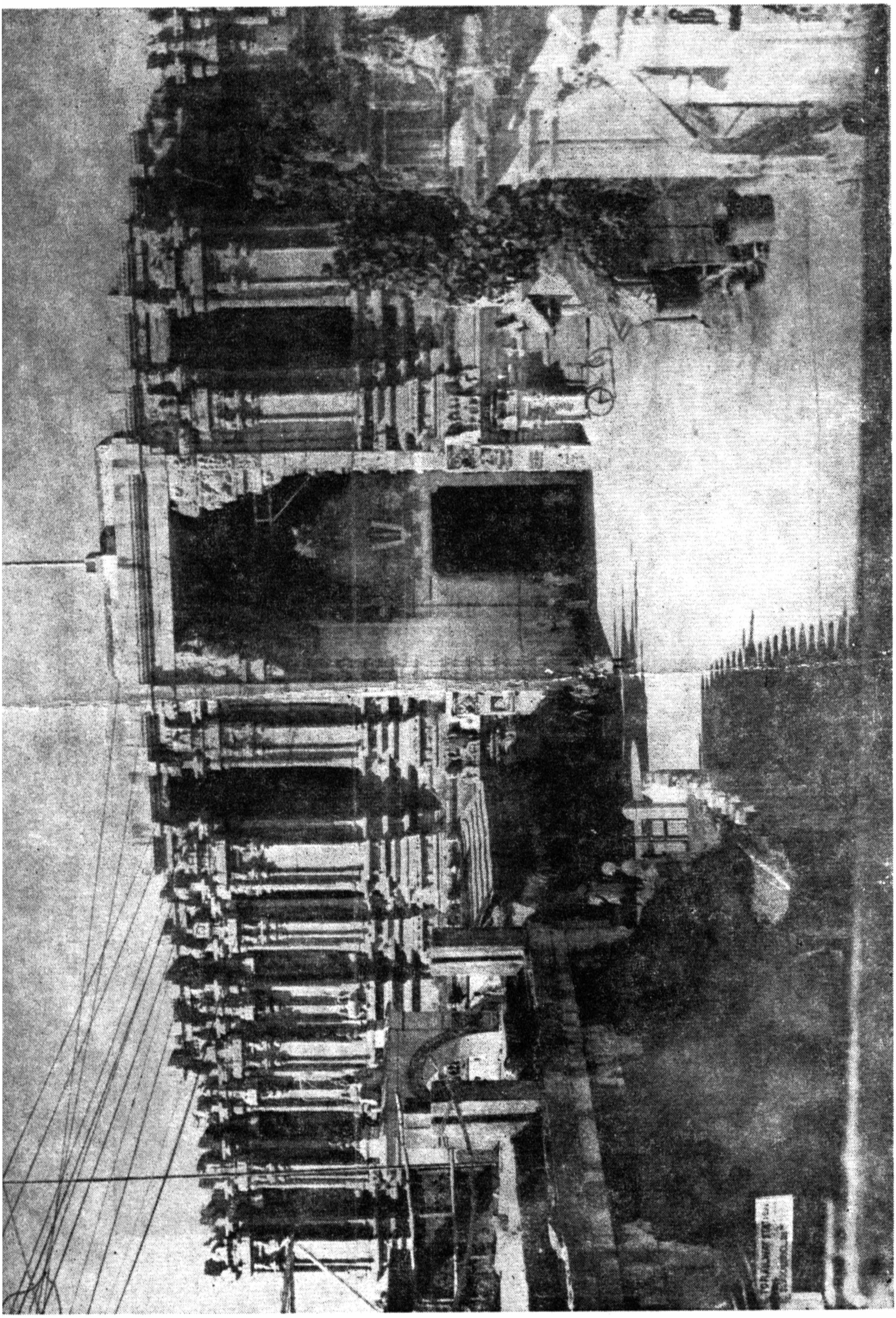
Besides, Hoysala endowments to the temple of Srirangam deserve notice. When Narasimha II camped near Srirangam, Sri Rama Bhatta, priest in charge of the Venugopala temple at Halebeid, visited Srirangam and endowed lands to the temple besides constructing the shrine of *Tiruk-kuzhal-Oothina Pillai* or Venugopala in the fifth prākāra of the temple with the surrounding sculptures and figurines

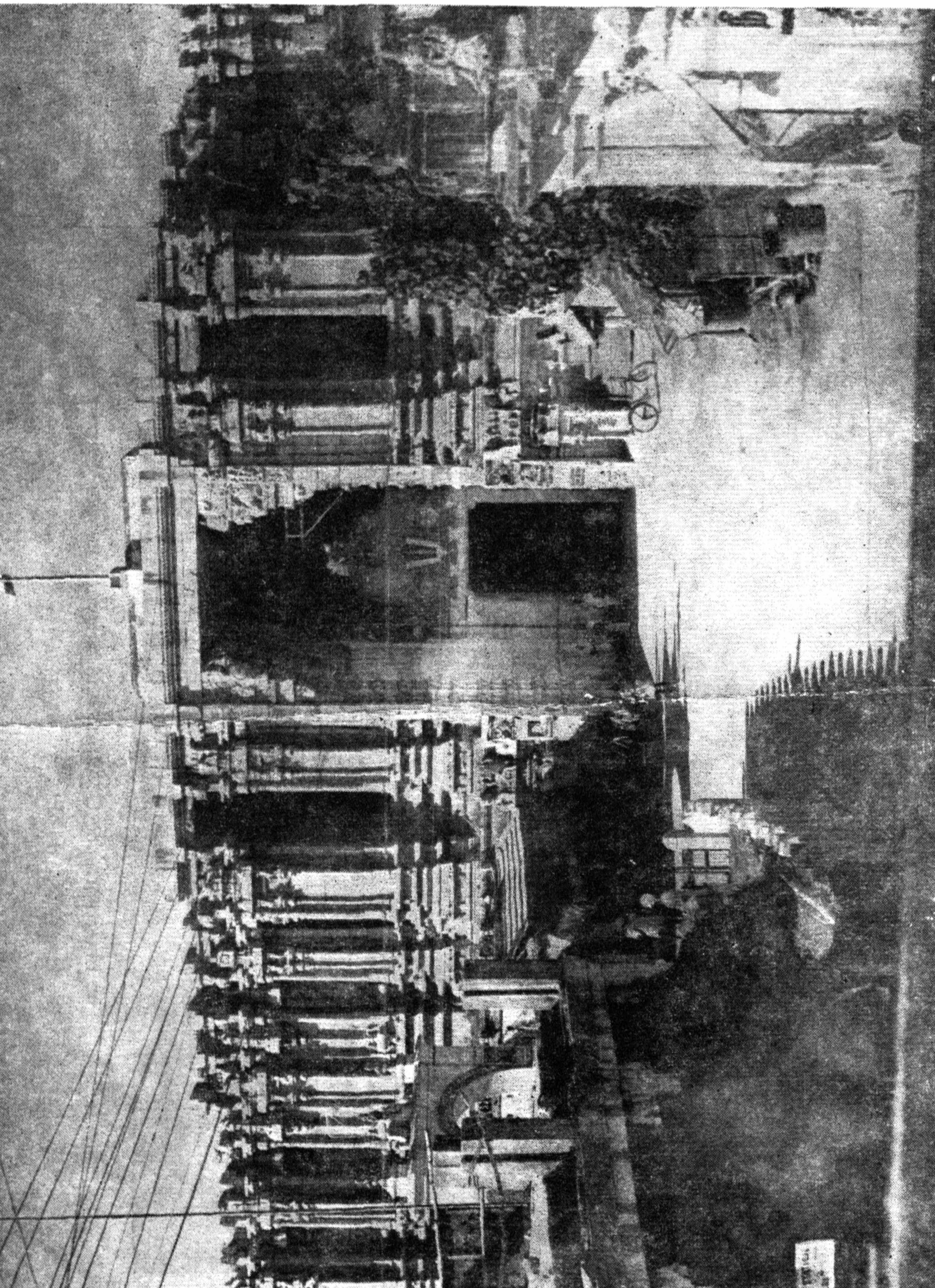
which are unmistakably a product of Hoysala Art. High up on the gopuram, in the middle of the East Chitrai Street, formerly called the *Kaliyugaraman Tiruveedi,* is engraved the *gandabherunda,* a Hoysala emblem. The latticed window of the gopuram and other features are also typical of Hoysala architecture. The gopuram was begun in the time of Narasimha and was completed by Jatavarman Vira Pandya during his occupation of Srirangam. Vira Pandya's surname *Kaliyugaraman* is also engraved on the gopuram (98 of 37, A.R.E. 1921–29). *Koyil-olugu* ascribes to Vira Narasimha the erection of the platform and mantapa in front of the shrine to Narasimha. During the reign of Someswara, his queen Devala Devi (54 of 92) made a gift for a *sandi* in her name, and his aunt Somela Devi (72 of 37) a gift of 1,00,000 kāśu for the maintenance of flower gardens. And among others in the next reign, Ramanatha's pradhānī, Mandalika Yamarajan Kampaya Dandanayaka, lavished gifts on the temple. The shrine to Paravasudeva in Ālinādan west-prākāra, Sudarsana and Lakshmi Narayana, a number of mantapams and porches are attributed to him. His name is inscribed on the pillars of the western porch of the thousand pillared mantapam.

An endowment (Inscription 80 of 1937) of much importance was the establishment of a hospital within the temple by Mahapradhani Singana Dandanayaka. The physician in-charge was Garudavahana Pandita, the minister's private physician, and the village of Mummudicholamangalam near Lalgudi was granted for the maintenance of this charity. This *ārogyaśālā* was damaged during the Muslim raids; and, the grandson of Garudavahana Pandit repaired it in 1493 A.D. (Insc. 81 of 37), and installed an image of Danvantari which is in worship even to this day. Another interesting gift was by Sokka Villi Bhatta, who bore the proud title of *Sakala Vidya Chakravartti* and was the recipient of a head-gear in-laid with rubies and a pair of chowries with golden handles from Vira Pandya who visited Srirangam in the 15th year of Vira Ramanatha and offered all these gifts at the feet of Sri Ranganatha. (Insc. 52 of 92).



The inner entrance Gopuram and a frontal porch—Srirangam.





The Graceful Temple of Sriranganathar:

The main entrance into Srirangam temple is through a magnificent but unfinished gateway on the South, into the all-encompassing *Adaiya-Valainthan Tiruveedhi*, which is also known as Rajaveedi. The Rayagopuram gateway was built by king Achyuta Raya (1530-1542 A.D.) of the Vijayanagar Empire during his six month's stay in Srirangam. It is a magnificent place of architecture 130 feet long and 100 feet broad; and the gateway is 28½ feet broad and 43 feet high. The four jambs or gate-posts are each of a single slab of granite, more than 40 feet in height, and the roofing slabs throughout measure from 23 feet to 24 feet. Had the ordinary brick gopuram of the usual proportion been added to this, the whole would have risen to a height of nearly 300 feet. Even as it is, it is one of the most imposing structures in South India. Its massive but graceful proportions combine the repose and dignity appropriate to the religious atmosphere attached to this holy spot. It is the farthest and seventh enclosure of the temple proper. The wall measures 3072 feet by 2521 feet, almost an area of over half a square mile, the largest that any temple in the South of India covers. The other three gopuram of this enclosure, are in the same style and were commenced on the same scale, but not being so far advanced when the work was stopped, their gate-posts project above their walls in a manner that gives them a very singular appearance, and has led to some strange theories as to their origin. Their date is probably the last years of the Vijayanagar period. The progress of their construction was possibly cut short by the great blow the empire experienced after the battle of Talikota in 1565 A.D. With the fall of the empire and its disruption into smaller and weaker States, with this and such constructions a magnificent style throughout the country (e.g. Madurai) came to a sudden end.

There are altogether within these seven prakaras twenty-one gopuras, large, small and unfinished, thirteen of which follow the axial line of the temple from one point of view.

The later towers have each a design of their own and differ from its neighbour in outline, detail and size. But the whole mass however is so harmoniously blended as to impress any visitor, with the sublimity of its design, and the mastery of its construction.

Recent research shows that the other two outer courts, inside the *Adaiya Valainthan* or the seventh, the *Chitrai* the sixth, and the *Tiruvikraman Tiruveedi*, the fifth were the latest to be formed. These two are not of any special architectural significance, as they extend through and into the surrounding town and are almost lost in the maze of the bazaar.

The Seventh Court

The seventh or the outer-most court is of four square streets and encompasses all the six others within. Many a mansion and house of considerable dimensions adorn its sides measuring 2108 feet by 1846 feet. The Gopuram gateway of this square is on the East, and is named the *Damodaran gopura vāsal* as at its entrance there is a shrine for Krishna as Damodaran. Sri Ranganatha graces this prakara in festive procession during the Brahmotsavams in Panguni (March) Chittirai (April) in the Horse Vahana, on the last day of the Vasanth festival in Vaikāśi, also in February as He proceeds to the float (Theppam) festival.

The Sixth Court

The next inner Court is the *Chittrai* or *Uttira* (சித்திரை வீதி) *Veedhi*, ascribed to a Chola Tiruvikraman. The prākāra is broad, and the temple cars of the Chitrai Brahmotsavam are dragged on this street, and the Lord's processions take place in this street on the first seven days of the Theppam Float festival.

At the South Western corner of this prākāra there is a shrine for *Manavala Mamunigal*, where daily *ārāthanās* are given as per prescribed *dittams* in the temple accounts. *St. Manavala* was the Thenkalai leader born in 1371 in Alvar Tirunagari. He lived to the age of 73 years and gave a new

turn to the teachings of Vedanta Desika. In his largeness of heart Manavala broke the commands of his Guru Tirukkoshtiyur Nambi, and gave out the secret doctrines freely to all since in the interest of the redemption of so many souls, he was prepared to sacrifice his own.

The Fifth Court—The Akalangan Tiruveedhi and the Temple Campus

Down the long and busy road, and after crossing the many transverse streets on either side occupied by the townsmen, merchants, banks and several offices, the temple of Sri Ranganatha is reached. The entrance is through a gopuram of considerable dimensions and sculptural beauty: the *Nanmukam Kottai Vasal.* The great Court-yard within is the *Akalangan Tiruveedhi.* The quadrangle is extensive, and flanked on either side with shops, and smaller shrines in between to Vaishnava Ācaryas.

On the left of the main entrance is the shrine to Ācarya Kurukesa or Koorattalvar. He was the foremost of Ramanuja's disciples, as he assisted his master in the writing of his *Bhashya* on the *Brahma Sutras.* Sri Ranganatha shows His grace on the baktha by stopping at this shrine as He returns (from festive processions) into the temple. And next to Kurukesa, there are the shrines to Tondar-adip-podi Alvar and still further north, the shrine to Tiruppan-alvar. And behind these, there is installed Vira Hanumar with the shrine to Vittala Krishnan.

The quadrangle has as its central piece, a four pillared mantapam. Sri Ranganatha halts during festivals at this mantapam where pooja is offered to Sri Ranganatha before he alights at the *Vahana mandapa.* On one of its pillars is sculptured a princely figure with a poniard resting on his waist, and one foot of his bearing the hero's (வீரக்கழல்) anklet. The figure is generally pointed as that of Poet Kambar as he is associated with this temple in inaugurating his *magnum opus*—the *Ramayanam.* The statue could not however be identified as such as only royalties wear such jewels or distinction on their person. Portrait sculptures came into vogue with the Vijayanagar period (A.D. 1336–1565), from

fourteenth century onwards as before it and earlier, only those of the Hindu pantheon and of human votive figures bearing lamps in their hands were the mode. And with the Nayak times, royalties in *sadha-seva* poses came to be introduced into temple pillar shafts, and wherever possible they figured as donors of a particular hall or of portion of the temple. This is evident in the temples at Tanjore, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, Srivillipputtur, Rameswaram, Alagarkoil, Kaliarkoil and many other places in South India.

From this angle, an unusual architectural feature is visible. These are certain saracenic or Moslem architectural remnants that yet remain on the enclosure walls in this Hindu temple. They are repeated in the western wall of the second prakara above the Senai Mudaliar shrine also. These are the remnants of the Moslem influence on this temple in the fourteenth century. Twice was Srirangam raided and terrible was her suffering.*

In the first Muslim raid under Malik Kafur (A. D. 1311) his men carried away the icon of Sri Ranganatha to distant Delhi along with inestimable booty from the temple treasury. While in the royal palace, Sri Ranganatha's beauty captured the imagination and heart of the Padushah's daughter, hereinafter named *Sultani*, and he was adored and worshipped by the young devotee. Time elapsed, and when peaceful times returned the temple priests approached the Padushah to restore to them their inestimable object of worship, and it was returned to them. The temple Ācāryas rushed back to Srirangam with the Idol of their heart and imagination and installed Him in the *sanctum-sanctorum.* The young princess, missing her heart's delight was in sore agony. Then on being appraised of the fact that the object of her devotions had been returned, rode to Srirangam in hot pursuit and finding Him installed in His *sanctum*, lost herself in His grace and was beatified. The Pādushah was intimated of the fact, and he on his part gave a large *jaghir* of villages for the

* See S. K. Ayyangar—*South India and her Muhammadan Invaders* pp. 157-160 also reference to *Guruparampara-prababham, Koyil-olugu, Yadeentrap-pravanap-prababham* also *Acharya Sukti-Muktavali.*

upkeep of the temple, renovated certain portions of the temple of which these are yet the standing remains.

The episode of Sultani—the Moslem devotee, is one to be correlated to those of *Kodhai*: Saint Andal of Srivillipputtur, Chera-kula-valli the daughter of the Chera Kulasekhara, and Chola-kula-valli, a daughter of the Chola and others, in their devotion to Sri Ranganatha.

In the second raid (A. D. 1327-28), the vicissitudes of the festive processional Sri Ranganatha was more eventful and disastrous to His bhaktas, as Srirangam was sacked. The Muslims coming on the Coleroon when Ranganatha was on a festive halt in a mantapam, cut off all the remnants that had stayed on, while the festive icon of Alagiya manavala was moved away to a place of safety by Vedanta Desika and Pillai-loka-achariar. The Muslims then entered and plundered Srirangam, mercilessly hacked 12,000 men, women and children to pieces and occupied Srirangam.

Those that escaped watched the havoc from the neighbouring villages only to be saved by Kampana Udaiyar's—a Sri Vaishnava. Years later, the icon Alagiya Manavala suffered strange vicissitudes, being carried at first to Sundarachalam (Alagarmalai) and then to the Kerala country: *Prapannamirthan* (Sources p. 38-39). After a short stay in that country, Desika took the images to Tirunarayanapuram in Mysore and finally installed them at Tirupati. In the mean while, Pillailokacharya's career closed with the sack of Srirangam, as he followed the image of Ranganatha to the places where he was carried, and he bravely perished a victim to the shock and the wounds he received in the course of its defence. By this time, the sultanate had declined, and Gopanna removedt he idols to Singavaram near Senji, his own head-quarters, and worshipped them in a cave temple till Kampanna and Gopannarya eventually re-installed Him at Srirangam in 1371 A.D. Gangadevi—the queen of Kampanna gives an account of Srirangam after its Muslim occupation in her *Madura Vijayam.**

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* *Madhura Vijayam* gives the condition of *Srirangam* after the Muslim occupation thus:

The shrine that presents itself next on the right and facing the four-pillared mandapa, is dedicated to Saint Ācharya Nathamuni (A. D. 824-924). To him goes the credit of laying the foundation of the noble line of Ācaryas of the Vaishnavas, and of being also the first of the Acaryas. He was a native of Viranarayanapuram now popularly known as Kattumannarkoil * near Chidambaram in the South Arcot District.

His father Isvara Muni was a Pancharatrin, who was the progenitor of the celebrated family of the Tatacharyas,

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"In Srirangam the Lord of serpents is seen warding off the tumbling debris of brick with his hood lest their fall disturb the sleep of yoga in which Hari is wrapped up there

When I look at the state of the temples of other Gods also my distress knows no bounds The foldings of their doors are eaten up by wood worms The arches over their inner sanctuaries are rent with wild growths of vegetation

These temples which were once resonant with the sounds of Mridanga drums are now echoing the fearful howls of jackals

The river Kaveri, uncurbed by proper bunds or dams has become deflected very much from her time honoured course and flows in all sorts of wrong directions as if imitating the Turuskas in their actions

The Brahmin streets where once the sacrificial smoke was ever seen rising and the chanting of Vedas always greeted the ears now exude the nasty odour of meat, and resound with the lion-roars of drunen Turuskas"

—S T in Cant VIII *Madura Vijayam*" p 61

And an inscription of Gopanarya giving his prayers to Sri Ranganatha is worth quoting "Hail! Prosperity! In the Saka year Bandhu priya (i e Saka—Samvat 1293)

VERSE—I Having brought (the God) from the Anjanadri (Mountain), the splendour of whose darkish peaks gives delight to the world having worshipped (Him) at Chenchi for some time, then having slain the Tulushkas whose bows were raised—Gopanarya, the Mirror of fame placing Ranganatha together with both Lakshmi and the Bhu Devi in his own town again duly performed excellent worship

VERSE—II Having carried Rangaraja, the Lord of the world, from the slope of the Vrishabhagiri (Mountain) to his capital, having slain by his army the proud Tulushka soldiers having made the site of Sriranga united with the golden age (Kritayuga) and having placed there this (God) together with Lakshmi and the Bhū Devi,—the Brahman Gopana duly performs, like the lotus-born (Brahma) the worship which has to be practised"

Translation by S Tiruvenkatachari—*Madura Vijayam* p 65—Annamalai University Series

Vedānta Deśika has immortalised Gopanna for his great services in two fine slokas, which are engraved on the Srirangam temple walls (Epi Ind VII pp 322 330)

* Kattumannarkoil, 16 miles from Chidambaram by bus is now a small town of commercial and religious importance with a temple for Vishnu as Sri Viranarayana Perumal and sub-shrines for Nathamuni and Alavandar

who have played a very important part in the religious history of South India, Nathamunigal was an erudite scholar in the Vedas, Smṛtis and other scriptures, a yogin and a devotee, and he used to make garlands for the local deity Rajagopala. Once he heard some pilgrims address Rajagopala with the Prabandha hymn which contained the beautiful expression "*Aravamuda*". It seemed to him that to contemplate God with the hymns of the Alvars which contained such a word was sweeter than the realisation of God by yoga itself. The Prabandhas had by then gone out of use in the land. For the purpose of recovering them, he proceeded to Alvar-Tirunagri and after considerable difficulties recovered them.

Nathamunigal divided the Prabandha into four parts of one thousand stanzas each, added introductory verses to each section, classified the verses according to different metres, and then introduced it to be sung in the temple of Rajagopala in his village. Not content with this, he took the very important step of approaching the authorities of Srirangam temple and persuaded them to institute a festival with the recitation of the *Prabandha*. From this time, the great Ekadasi festival in the month of Margazhi, lasting for three weeks and devoted to the chanting of the Prabandha, has been a great feature at Srirangam. And this has been taken up by all the prominent Vishnu temples of South India. And the establishment of the images of the Alvars and the conduct of the recitation-festival soon spread throughout the Sri Vaishnava land.

By giving the Prabandha the status of the Vedas in the temple festival, Nathamuni raised the language of the people to an equality with the hoary and learned tongue of the Brahminical clergy. He proved that the holiness of the works written in Tamil was not in any way inferior to that of works written in Sanskrit. The innovation was all the more remarkable for its accomplishment by one who was regarded as unsurpassed in Vedic lore and yogic contemplation. One immediate and momentous result of this great

reform was the rise of a new and extensive type of religious literature in South India, half Sanskrit and half Tamil, the object of which was to expound the Tamil Veda and reconcile its teachings with those of *prasthanatraya*. Commentaries of different volumes and qualities came from time to time into existence, and discussions of knotty passages in the *Prabandha* became as favourite a work with the scholars as the discussions of the *Brahma Sutras*.

The next edifice that greets one is the *Ranga Vilas Mantapam* which forms one of the structural excellences of the temple. This is possibly of the time of Tirumalai Nayak of Madurai (A.D. 1623-59) as seen from the similarity with the type of double pillared columns like those found in Madurai. They are in varying degrees of sculptural richness showing "considerable refinement and delicacy in design suggesting alike to those who work in stone or metal."

The facade of the mantapa is very attractive with sculptural figures in stucco depicting Krishna as Parthasarathi (driving the chariot of Arjuna), Sri Ranganatha in Yogasayana, Sree Rama, Chakkarathalvar and others. Sri Ranganatha halts at this mantapa for a day in every one of the Brahmotsavas in *Thai, Masi, Panguni* and *Chitrai*. This is also the *āsthama mantapa* for Ranganatha when any Ubayakar fails to perform the Ubayam or when the deity cannot be taken out in procession owing to rain or any other inconvenience.

To the west of the Ranga Vilas, there is the *Yanai-Erum mandapa* from where Sri Ranganatha mounts for procession the Elephant Vahanam; and, at that moment tender cocoanut-milk is offered to Sri Perumal as the *nivethanam*.

To the right side of this mantapa in the interior is the *Sannithi* of Sri Andal as *Soodik-Koduttha Nachiar*. This struc-

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Note: T. A. Gopinatha Rao identifies *Srinatha* of the Anbil Plates of Sundara Chola II (Epi. Ind. XV. para 5) with Acarya Nathamunigal. And the plates say that Srinatha was born in the agrahara of Viranarayanapuram and died at Gangaikondasolapuram, which must be in A.D 1024 at the earliest. Sri Alavandar was his grandson, the Guru and Preceptor of Ramanuja. This is subject to scrutiny.

ture is of the Chola period, and was formerly the Toppu-Raman Sannithi. Even today, the enshrined figures of Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman are here, along with Sri Andal. On account of Moslem troubles, Sri Andal had to be moved from her original shrine in *Adaya-valainthan-Tiruveedhi* and reconsecrated here.

On the sixth day of the festival when Sri Ranganatha mounts the Elephant Vahan, He halts at this Andal sanctum for giving His *darsan*; and on his processional return has an exchange of garlands; Sri Perumal's garland is bestowed on Sri Andal and He takes in return Her garland for His wearing.

Coming out of Andal's shrine, a scene of sculptural exquisiteness is visible on the left, in the shrine of Sri Venugopala, founded by Sri Rama Bhatta of the time of the Hoysala Narasimha II (A.D. 1217) (A.R.E. 1937 Report). The shrine is of fine proportions and bears on its outer walls, sculptures and figurines of high artistic merit. It is almost a Museum of Hoysala Art at its best, its pillars and pilasters almost reminding one of the excellences of the Subrahmanya shrine at Tanjavur of the Nayak period. Thereafter, the office of the Trustees of the Temple is reached.

The *Vāhana mantapa* lies next, to the north-west of the Ranga Vilas mantapa. It is here, the preparations for the festive processions are made. e.g. installing the deity on the respective vahanas. On return, the Vahana is set down and then the Lord passes into the temple courts and into His sanctum. In its close vicinity, there is a shrine for Krishna, the walls and pillars of which are finely sculptured, Possibly this shrine is also of the Hoysala period. The *Amutha Kalasa Garuda* shrine which is next-adjacent is also of beautiful workmanship: and, Garuda is seen holding a *Kalasa* of *Amirtha* in one of his hands.

At the end of the Ranga-Vilas Mantapam there is a *Kalkambam* and *Balipeetam*. On one side of the *Kalkambam* there are beautiful carved figures of Hanuman, Garuda and

the Chakkaram—the Discus of Vishnu. These were formerly in worship by the Harijans who offered puja to them; and, now left alone after the temple was thrown open to them on the 2nd of February 1947.

Next is to be seen the Chokkappanai Hanuman, opposite to the Karthigai gopura vāsal.

Chakkarathalvar Sannidhi

Proceeding from the Chokkappanai Hanuman one finds at the extreme left the Chakkarathalvar Sannidhi. The deity is considered powerful and therefore he is not taken out in procession from his sanctum. It is related that because of his powerful aspect he is kept under control by Sri Parthasarathi at the extreme right, situated exactly opposite to this sannidhi. The bronze figure represents the processional Utsavar. Pooja is offered during the four *pooja-kālās.* Only certain ceremonies such as *Jeshtabhishekam* and *Tirunakshathram* are performed for the *Utsavar.* There is the *Moolavar;* this is the *Sudarsanam* or the *Chakra* of Vishnu. There are inscribed the 108 *Aksharms* over the circle attached to this *Moolavar.* They represent the 108 yogic *Yanthrams.* On the reverse side of the Moolavar, is Yoga Narasimha who could be seen only in the course of *Pradakshanam:* coming round the corridor. Only the Archakas have access to Him from within the *Moolasthanam.* Chakkarathalvar of Vishnu is almost a counter-part of the *Navagrahas* in a Siva temple. Saturdays are considered most effective for worship at this shrine. Pooja lasts till about 8-30 p.m. at nights at this shrine.

The Administrative Office of this Devastanam is located to the east of the Kartigai-gopura Vasal. Attached to this, is the Devastanam Library and Museum, which adds to the Cultural wealth of the place. It is a centre ef atttraction to visitors; the Library contains a varied collection of books on religion, philosophy and the fine arts. The Museum has a very rare collection of bronzes, remnants of an ivory palanquin of Nayak period, ancient coins and other antique works

of art. Old pieces of coats of mail and shields and swords used by ancient Hindu Rajas are also preserved here, besides a number of Copper plate inscriptions.

Saint Ramanuja's Sannidhi

Opposite to the Museum, there is the Ramanuja or the *Udayavar sannidhi,* known also as *Bashyakār sannidhi.* It is the acarya's last resting place, It is a sub-shrine managed by a separate *Pooja paricharaka,* the right of general control and supervision being vested with the authorities of the Srirangam administration. The acarya's figure is taken out in festive processions on his (*Thirunakshathram*) natal asterism day; and within the temple *prakaras* during *Adhyayana Uthsavam.*

By the side of the Udayavar sannidhi is located the Parthasarathi sannidhi, and next to it is *Pillai lokachariar's* sannidhi. He is the author of the *Eighteen Rahasyas,* being esoteric theological works. He perished bravely in his act of moving the Alagiya Manavala—the Utsavar of Srirangam to a place of safety during the Moslem raid of 1327 A.D.

The Fourth Court or Aalinātan Tiruveedhi

The actual portion of the temple may be said to begin at the fourth Court, the *Āalinātan Tiruveedhi* of Tirumangaialvar. Its outer walls measure 1235 feet by 849 feet with a gopuram in the centre of three of its sides, on the north, south and east. The inner court is entered through the *Kārthigai gopura vāsal,* with Ganga and Yamuna figuring as *dvarapalakas* on either side. This is the second gateway leading into the inner temple precincts. The gopuram gateway is so called because in the month of November–December, on the Karthigai day, a holy beacon of fire (of palmyrah leaves on a scaffolding of about 35 feet in height) is lit ceremoniously, at a distance of a few yards from this gopura entrance.

Entering the *Prākāra,* there is the spacious *Paraman mantapam* named after Paraman, its architect: The sanctum bears *Garudalvar*—the bearer of Vishnu. Garudalvar is a

colossal figure in stucco painted in colours and in a sitting posture. The festive (*Utsavar*) icon of Garuda is set before this great figure, and receives daily (*āradhan*) offerings and (*Tirumanjanam*) ablutions on festival occasions, and on the day of the natal asterism of Garuda. During the annual *Vaikuntha Ekadesi Festival*, Sri Perumal decked in *Mohini alankāra* halts at this mantapam when thousands of devotees enjoy the *darsan* of the Lord.

With this Garuda shrine at its southern end, the Garuda mantapa is a lofty and majestic one. Besides, it is of historical interest. Each of the pillars supporting this huge structure is embellished with a portrait sculpture on its shaft. The figures are of those reigning princes of Madurai Nayak dynasty who ruled from—Tiruchirappalli, and of donors who have been responsible for this porch.

To the right of the Garuda mantapa there is a shrine for Tiruk-kachchi Nambi cared for by a separate Pooja *paricharaka*.

The Nammalvar 'Sannidhi on the left side of this Garuda mantapam is also another of the sub-temples.

Adjacent to these is enclosed the *Surya Pushkarni* tank, now in disuse and disrepair; and at its opposite northern end of the *prakaram* there is located its counter-part the sacred *Chandra Pushkarni*: the two forming the "Pools of the Sun and the Moon".

Vahana Arai and Temple Cars:

Next to the Suryapushkarni, is the *Vahana-Arai* or the rooms wherein the following silver and gold Vahanams (Vehicles for the festive processions) are preserved: (1) One *Sesha* or Serpent Vahanam, (2) One *Karpaka Vriksham*, (3) Three (Horse) *Asva Vahanams*, (4) Two *Garuda Vahanams*, (5) One *Yali Vahanam* of silver, (6) One *Elephant Vahanam* of silver (7) One *Single Prabai* and One Double *Prabai*, (8) One *Simha* or Lion Vahanam, (9) One *Hanumantha Vahanam*, (10) Two *Hamsa Vahanams* and (11) Two Palanquins.

From the steps of the *Garuda mantapam* towards ·the West, the circum-ambular court proceeds on to one's left, and soon five large cylindrical structures are noticed. These are large granaries for storing several thousands of measures of paddy required the year round for the daily rice *padittaram* and for the festive requirements. Their frontage is a spacious quadrangle where paddy is dried and hand-pounded, with rooms where the temple provisions are stored and issued.

The *Garuda Mandapam* steps at their right lead to the temple *madaipalli* (Kitchen) the Sesharayar Mantapam and the Vellai Gopuram to be described later.

Proceeding further on the Provision Stores, and turning the corner, one reaches the *Dhanvantari* (the Medicine man of the Gods) shrine and the adjacent *Chandra Pushkaranai* tank. The former sanctum is for the Physician of the Devas, and it is of interest that on a particular day of the year, Sri Ranganatha is administered the "நாவல் பழ அமுது" (Koyilolugu 43) for His health. The *pushkaranai*, is semi-circular with a number of Punnai trees (Calophyllum) growing on its edges with a number of votive figures. These form a spectacular scene.

Then the *(முக்கண் வாசல்) Mukkan-vasal* giving entrance to the South, West and Eastern doorways, and a door step with five pits (ஐந்து குழி), are reached. And, from here, is reached an elevated shrine dedicated to *Mettu-alagiya-Simhar.* The construction is ascribed to Chola Dharma Varma, and the figure is a gorgeous *Narasimha* in stucco and painted in glaring colours. He is known as *Edutha-kai-alagiya-simhar* (எடுத்த கை அழகிய சிங்கர்) or as the Narasimha who struck down the irate Hiranya and as well protected and blessed the young Prahlada. As one comes down the steps, there is a four-pillared mantapa, where, it is said, Poet Kambar inaugurated his Rāma Kāthai, the *Ramayanam.* This fact is also yet to be authenticated; but, a reference in the *Divya Suri-Charithai* says that here, in an adjacent spacious Arulalar Perumal mandapam, there took place a disputation between Ramanuja and Yagnamurti for fourteen days, and at

the end, *Mettu-alagia-Simhar*, the aforesaid Narasimha, signified the victory of Ramanuja over his adversary, by a roaring laughter.

The Nachiyar-Sannidhi. Overlooking these exterior mantapas, is a covered court leading into the sanctuary of the goddess, *Nachiar Sri Ranganayaki*. It is a distinct inner temple within the major outer precincts of the fourth *prakara*. The majestic prakara all-round it, has several *Kolumantapas* of which the *Panguni Uttara mantapa* to the South and the *Dhola Utsava mantapa* to the North are of huge proportions. The frontal twelve-pillars supporting the southern prakara wall are embellished with the figures of the ten Alvars, and ceiling above the pillared corridor is embellished with paintings from the *Ramayana*, such as those of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, and scenes from the *Vishnu Purana* and from epic accounts.

The outer mantapa ceilings are also embellished with Nayak paintings with legends in Telugu, probably of the times of Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha Nayak (1704–1731 A.D.). These paintings as illustrating the contemporary life of the people are worth a closer study and a better state of preservation. The paintings in the *Tiru-vun-nazhi prakara* of the Goddess is of Puranic interest being scenes from the *Bhagavatha*. They need also care and better preservation.*

The Goddess, Sri Ranganachiar, in her sanctum is in a sitting posture. Unusually enough, two *Moolastāna* figures of the Goddess will be noted by the worshipper. The inner-

* "The other scenes from the legends of Prahlada and Banasura are also here. Wall paintings of the period of the Nayaks of Madura of the conventional class exist in the vestibules round Ranganatha and Ranganayaki shrines, and on the high Prakara Mandapams adjoining the Ranganayaki shrine. The scenes are from *Ramayana, Mahabaratha, Vishnu Purana*, the *Vaishnava Tirupatis*, and other scenes connected with Ranganatha's glory, and also connected with scenes of ethnological interest. As most of these paintings have legends in Telugu Characters and one of them speaks of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayaka, it is clear that the paintings are of historical value, not to speak of their ethnic, religious and artistic interests. As the paintings round the shrines are covered with smoke and soot in some places and white-washed elsewhere, preservative measures are immediately necessary".—T. N. R.

most and farthest was the original Goddess, walled in during a moslim raid, and later discoverd.

A special characteristic of the festival of the Goddess is that Sri Ranganāchiar never steps out of her shrine, as it is said of Her, as a 'Padi-Thānda-Pathni' (படி தாண்டா பத்தினி); and Sri Ranganatha Himself goes to her temple on six festive occasions in the year. The most significant occasion is on the annual *Panguni Uttiram* day, when Sri Ranganatha and Sri Ranganachiar are seated on a swing and worshipped together.

To the east of Sriranga Nachiar's shrine, and adjoining the southern gopura entrance, is situated a shrine to the great Vaishnava Commentator, *Vedanta Desika*, and next to his that to *Peria Vaccan Pillai* enshrined with his *Ishta Deva*—the Lord Srinivasa of Venkatam.

Next the *Vellai-gopuram* is reached. It is the largest and the tallest in the entire Scheme. It is of nine storeys in height, and from its top-floor one can have a panoramic view of this great temple and its natural setting.

From here, it is also possible to trace out all the different mantapas, which combine to present a wide expanse of uninspiring flat roofs with here and there a golden cupola asserting itself to indicate the position of some important shrine. Towards the centre of this scheme, the innermost sanctuary may be recognised by its apsidal vault of gold—*the Ranga Vimanam*, while nearer the main southern entrance is another large cupola marking the *Garuda* shrine. The height of the *Vellai* gopuram is 164 feet 2″ and stands over a plinth area of 7410 feet. The other three circum-ambular streets round the temple have each its majestic entrance towers.

Of the several mantapas in the entire scheme, the *Thousand-Pillared Mantapa** is the largest. Its construction is ascribed to Perumal Devan, and as completed by Kanbaya

* The Journal of Indian Art and Industry (viii) 1899; plates 89-94 for Plan and Section of Thousand-pillared mandapam, columns and doors.

veeraya Dandaya; Nayakan, this prakara is the largest, measuring 500 feet by 160 feet. Arranged in rows, within are over 953 carved granite monoliths, all leading up to a shrine at the farther end, where the other fortyseven pillars which make up the thousand are improvised by temporary posts and pillars of the grand pandal for *Vaikuntha Ekadasi* festival. This is the Durbar Hall of Sri Ranganatha during the annual *Ekadasi Brahmotsavam.*

Nearby is the *Tirumāmani* (திருமாமணி) mantapa. It is a graceful structure 40 feet square and of 28 pillars, and is ascribed to Tirumangai Alvar. Here at this mantapa, Sri Renganatha graces the recitals of the (*Tiruvaimozhi*) of Thousand pasuras. These recitals and their actual interpretation by songs and discourses, and by *abhinaya* or *bhāvas*, by *Araiyars* impersonating the Alvars in the Vaikunta Ekadasi festival are enjoyed by thousands of bhaktas. Facing this great structure, lies a smaller one, known as the *Seshagiri Rao mantapam,* 95 feet by 83 feet, which stands on 104 columns. The frontage of it is borne on a series of eight colonnades of furiously fighting steeds, each rearing up to a height of nearly nine feet, with riders on their back, and sticking javelins into the sides of attacking tigers. These impress one as the most majestic specimens of stone carving found in the temple, and the whole is executed in a technique " so emphatic as to be not like stone but hardened steel " ! Possibly the motif is suggestive of the time that these were sculptured. The armed forces of the Vijianagar Empire were of the finest calibre, inspired and led by rulers of great audacity and daring. They reveal something of the temper, " a feeling of exultant invicibility translated into the power of good or evil embodied in the art ". Each of them is a single piece of gneiss worked in very minute details.

The Third Court of Kulasekhara

The next inner Court is the third prakara known as *Kulasekharan Tiruveedhi.* It is entered by *Aryabhattal* gateway, so named, as formerly it was guarded by men from the North. Chakrattālvar and Garuda guard the gate now. The

The Vijayanagar Colonnades, Srirangam Temple.

Court measures 426 feet by 295 feet. The centre within is a marvellous sight of gold—the (அணி அரங்கன் திருமுற்றம்) *Ani-arangan tirumurram.* Formerly the centre with the Dwaja-Stambam and Bali-peetam was bare, but they have since been closed, completely covered over with plates of glittering gold by the munificence of the family of M/s V. Perumal Chetty & sons and other donors. Sri Ranganatha arrives here in a chariot, and hoists the flag (*Dwaja*) to signify the commencement of the *brahmotsavams* in the months of Thai, Panguni and Chittrai. The bhakta offers here his first obeisance to the Lord, before entering the inner sanctum. Here, in time of drought, the *balipeetam* is given an ablution of Cauveri water in hundreds of potfuls which is believed to be succeeded by bountiful rain.

At this sanctuary, the bhaktas place their first fruits and produce of the year as their thanks-offerings.

To the West of the *Aryabhattal* entrance is the *Tirupavittra* mandapa of Kulasekhara. Here, in the month of Avani, (Aug.-Sept.) Sri Perumal celebrates the annual function of wearing fresh *Tiru-pavittram* (thread-wearing) for Himself and bestowing it on all His bhaktas. To the west of this mandapa, there are the sanctums for Hayagriva and Saraswathi.

At the north-west of the *Tiru-murram,* there is on a pillar, a standing figure of Hanuman in *sadha-seva* pose. His worship is much sought after, as for one who is lavish in answering the prayers of his devotees. A *dhittam* for a daily *ārathana* and *abhishekam* for the Hanuman is performed punctiliously.

To the West of the *Tiru-murram,* there is the spacious *Tulabhara Mantapa* of Maravarman Sundara Pandiyan (A.D. 1251-1268) (Vide A.R.E 1912 p. 142) Sundara Pandyan weighed himself seated on a caparisoned elephant on a boat, and used that treasure for this temple's beneficence. This mantapa has laterly been used as a *Dholak Mandapa* for the swing festival in the month of November by Kanthadaiyar Ramanujan, the elder brother of Rama Raya of Vijayanagar

dynasty. Proceeding further east, there is the old temple kitchen (*Madaippalli*) for preparing the offerings to Sri Perumal, also two capacious stone receptacles which formerly stored the ghee required for the preparations.

Proceeding west-wards of this Court, there are a set of rooms for keeping the temple paraphernalia, and at the centre of the passage a covered pillared processional passage known as *Senai-venran-tiru-mandapa* of Kulasekhara also known as *Tirunadai-maligai* (திருநடை மாளிகை) which leads to its further end. This path-way and enclosure is now known as *Durai pradakshinam* as it leads to a spacious *Ul-kodai mandapa* raised by the then reigning Nayak king, Vijia Ranga Chokkanatha, who had instituted a summer festival for Sri Perumal during the hot months and conferred the appellation *Dorai* for the *Pradakshinam* as an honorofic appellation for royalties and men of rank.

Nearby, at the centre of this Tiruveedhi, there is the (*Parama-padha-vāsal*)—the Gate of Salvation,—which is opened only on the *Vaikuntha Ekadasi* day for the passing through of Sri Perumal and all his bhaktas, and remains open for the succeeding nine days of the *Rappatthu* festival. They enter through this gateway and pass to the Thousand-pillared mantapa. Sri Perumal also stops near at this entrance to the *vasal* for the recitals of the Vedas and Prabandhas before proceeding further on.

Turning over the corner of this Court there are located the *Aravinda Nayakiyar Tiru-madaip-palli* where the food offerings for Sri Perumnl are prepared and also from where the Karthigai Torch is lit and taken to Sri Perumal's presence and from there to light the beacon on the Karthigai Deepam day.

The Second Court of Raja Mahendra Chola

Almost at the centre of the third Court is the *Nazhikai-kettan* gateway giving entrance into the second court: the *Rajamahendra Cholan Tiruveedhi*. Its sides measure 240 feet by 181 feet. The gateway is guarded at the front by Badran

and Subadran, and at the rear by *Sanga-Nithi* and *Paduma-Nithi.* The entrance is named *Nazhikai-kettan,* as in former days there was a clepsydra or time measuring plate for knowing the time of the hour of the day; and it was the custom, that Lord Ranganatha, when he came out of this Court for any festive procession, was intimated the time of the day by *Nazhikai.* At this Court, the *Pancha-Paruva* festivities, the nine days of *Rappatthu* in *Vaikuntha Ekadasi,* the *Chitrai-Kodai* festival of four days, and 'the *Ekanta seva* as Perumal enters into His Sanctum with the music of Veena, are conducted.

The Court bears to the left of the entrance the Temple Treasury (*கருஹலம்*) where all the costly jewels and vessels are safe-guarded; and as the corner is turned a cloistered corridor bears a number of rooms, where the Lord's apparel are kept, and where water is warmed for His ablutions, where sandal paste is prepared, for making the Civet ointment on Fridays (*சுக்கிர வார அறை*), and where the (*திருமண் காப்பு*) and sweet scents for the sandal paste are prepared.

Then, the *Padiyetta sevai* flight of steps (corresponding to Panchakshara steps in Siva temples) appear, giving entrance into the *Rajamahendra Tiruvāsal.* It was here that Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha, the reigning Nayak, his royal spouse, son and daughter-in-iaw were denied the sight of (*படியேத்த சேவை*) since they arrived just a little late, and Sri Perumal had just passed over the steps. And when requested by the monarch for a repetition, they were told promptly "Och-chetikke", "the next year". The rules laid down by Ramanuja in the twelfth century for the conduct of these ceremonials were so rigid and inviolable that they could not be waived for any reason. This was on a *Kowsika Ekadasi* day, and the royal group is still to be seen in ivory, as they stood transfixed by that reply. The figures are now encased in glass, and offer an example to the immutability of the standing orders prevailing in the temple. The manner of Sri Perumal's coming out of His sanctum, and of His return was likewise settled. It was quiet and noiseless as

that of a serpent (Sarpa-gathi) when coming out, and when returning the procedure was *(சிம்ஹ கதி) Simha-gathi*, rapid and triumphant as that of a lion.

Proceeding further on, one finds at the north western corner, there is the temple *Yāgasāla*. Here Sri Perumal has his *tirumanjanam* (bath) during the *Brahmotsavas*, and returns after the *Pancha-Kunda homams*; and on all other days His representative—the *Yāga-bherar*—who is also known as *Tiru-aranga-azhu-kaiyar* officiates for Sri Perumal. Opposite to the Yāgasala is the porch of Tondaiman—known as *Tondaiman-Kuradu*.

As the corner is now turned, there is the sanctum of *Vishwaksenar* or *Senai Mudaliar*. He is considered the Minister of Sri Perumal and the Generalissimo of His forces. He is in a sitting posture, while the standing figure is meant for being taken out on festive occasions. By his side are Hanuman and Vibishana as his advisers. The procedure is that Sri Perumal's mandates are sent out through this functionary, and when Sri Perumal moves out of the temple precincts for any festivity, He hands over charge to him, and when He returns, He bestows a garland on the temple *Maniagar*, as personifying the *Senai Mudaliar*. All Perumal's food offerings are also offered to this Senai Mudaliar.

The Arjuna Mantapam:

The porch next in order is *Arjuna Mantapam* to the east of Senai Mudaliar's shrine. It is a spacious mandapa, from where Sri perumal, with the Alvars and acaryas presides over the *Prabanda* recitals, and witnesses their acting the Puranic episodes with mudras and abhinayas for the ten days of the *Pagal-Patthu* (பகல் பத்து) *Ekadasi* festival. On the evening of the tenth day, Sri Perumal is bedecked here in *Mohini guise* (*Avatharam*) and proceeds to the *Vaikunda Ekadasi Mantapa*. Sri Perumal also gives *darsan* as such at this mantapa on the *Kowsika Ekadasi* and *Sri Ramanavami* festivities.

Kulasekhara Nāchiar:

Nearby, there is a sanctum for Chera Kulavalli, daughter of the Chera Kulasekhara, in the North-western corner of this mantapa. The young devotee lost her heart and soul to Sri Ranganātha, and the Chera gave her away in marriage to the deity with a bountiful dowry with which, benefactions and improvements to this temple have been carried out. In deference to His devotees' wishes, Sri Perumal gives *darsan* here seated with Chera Kula-Valli on the Sri Ramanavami day. Near Chera-Kula-valli's sanctum, in this mantapa, there is another for the Moslem devotee—Sultani. Her resemblance is painted on the wall, and Sri Perumal gives a (*Padiyetta Sevai*) *darsan* for this devotee on the first ten days of the *Pagal-patthu-festival*.

Adjacent to this is the *Revathi Mantapa*, where Sri Perumal celebrates His natal asterism by an abishekam for Himself and receives ārathana on this day in the year. To the south of Revathi and on a lower level to the Arjuna Mantapa, there is the spacious *Kili Mantapa* named after a Kili Chola, where formerly there were kept a number of parrots. This early structure has laterly been renovated by Tirumangai-mannan in the seventh century.

The south eastern corner of this mantapa bears a shrine for *Krishnan*. Therein are installed Krishna, his parents, Para-Vāsudeva, Devaki, Rohini and others. Para-Vāsudeva is here seen with a pot of milk and a feeder for Krishna. The annual *Uri-yadi* (உறியடி) festival is celebrated here for two days during *Sri Jayanthi*. The *Kili* Mantapa as laterly renovated, with its twin pillars and flower corbels and structural excellences, is worthy of being noted.

What is next seen is a painted portrait of Srinivasa Perumal of Tirupati. The legend is that, Pillaip-perumal Ayyangar would not sing the praises of Srinivasa of Tirupati, and Sri Ranganātha pacified him here saying that He and Srinivasa are one and identical.

What next appears before the worshipper is the extensive *Alagia Manavālan Tiru Mantapa*. It also bears the name

Sandana Mantapa. This great mantapa overlooks the sacred door-steps leading into the sanctum-sanctorum of Sri Ranganātha; and, worshippers congregate here during times of *ārathanās.* Here at this mantapa, Sri Perumal receives an *abibheka* on the *Ekadasi* and *Amavasya* days. Facing Ranganatha from at a distance, is a standing figure of Garuda in *Sadhaseva* pose. He inaugurates the flag-hoisting on the *Dhvaja Stambham,* and the taking down after the festival is over. Nearby, is a Chamber of Mirrors (கண்ணாடி அறை) wherein Sri Ranganātha delights to give *seva* to His bhaktas staying there during the nights of the Brahmotsava. It is a *divya darsan'* to worship Him there.

The First Court:

From this mandapa, the *sanctum sanctorum* of Sri Ranganātha is reached by the Tiru-anukkan (திரு அணுக்கன்) gateway guarded on either side by Jaya-Vijayal. The door is a highly ornamented one with sturdy brass knobs. Once inside this entrance, the *Gayatri Mantapa* borne on twenty-four pillars is reached. Two pillars standing opposite the entrance are (திருமணத் தூண்) and they are said to support the feet of Para-Vāsudeva worshipping Sri Perumal from above the Sikhara. The centre of the *Gayatri Mantapa* bears an elevated platform where the food offerings for Sri Perumal are placed.

The sanctuary of Sri Perumal is known as *Periya Sannithai* and it is a square compartment, but the actual chamber outside is circular, the shape of the whole "resembling a small chaitya hall as may be seen by its golden domical roof—the Ranga Vimanam projected above the flat roof outside". The circular chamber has on its outer wall two niches for Viswaksenar or Vigneshwara on the right, and Goddess Durga to the left. The chamber: *Tiru-vun-nazhi* has a square circum-ambular corridor known as *Dharma Varma Tiruveedhi.* The upper portions of this prakara wall have Nayak paintings of over 300 years old, depicting almost exact topographical line drawings in colour of the

One Hundred and Eight (நூற்றெட்டு திவ்ய தேசம்) Vaishnavite centres of worship. The ceiling of the corridor bear paintings of scenes from the *Ramayana* and of the *sthala Purana.* The paintings are in a neglected state, blackened with dust and soot, and had better be preserved well and early. The prakara has besides niches for Vasudeva and Yoga Narasimha. And over the circular roof of the *Sanctum sanctorum* is the *Sriranga Vimanam* in gold with the figure of Para Vasudeva facing south and in a standing posture and four gold Kalasams representing the four Vedas—Rig, Yajur, Sama and Adharvana. This Vimana with the four Kalasams are visible from the *Senai Mudaliar pradakshanam;* and, the Paravasudevar from the *Kili Mandapa.* As the bhakta approaches the holy presence of Sri Ranganatha over the flight of Kulasekhara steps of the sanctum, he is in sight of Sri Perumal as *Yoga Sayanamurti* lying recumbent on Adisesha serving as His couch, and the serpent's five hoods spread over the head of the Lord like an umbrella. The Lord is also seen with His right hand pointing to his crown and the left pointing to his feet, thus showing His immanence in all souls, and that His feet are the salvation of all. The figure of the Lord is twenty-one feet in length and is in stucco. He faces the south, the direction of Lanka, as says Tondar-adip-podi Alvar:

" குடதிசை முடியை வைத்துக் குணதிசை பாதம் நீட்டி
வடதிசை பின்பு காட்டித் தென்திசை இலங்கை நோக்கி
கடல் நிறக் கடவுள் எந்தை அரவணைத் துயிலுமா கண்டு
உடல் எனக்குருகுமாலோ என்செய்கேன் உலகத்தீரே "
[திருமாலை பாசுரம் 19]

And possibly Sri Perumal's vision of the South accounts for the prosperity of the Southern regions forming the *Tamil Nadu.*

In front of the recumbent *Moolavar* in this holy sanctum, there are installed the festive and processional Sri Ranganātha, in a standing posture with Sri Devi and Sri Bhudevi—the Goddesses seated on either side. These images are taken out in procession in all the festivals, the year round. And, at the foot of *Yogasayana Perumal,* there is a bronze of Yāgabherar —also known as Tiru-aranga-mālikaiyār, who during the

Moslem raids, was in worship and officiated in all the temple festivities. The moolavar of Sri Ranganātha lying on Adisesha is annually anointed with a special unguent: (தைலக் காப்பு). The ointment is a preparation of very costly ingredients which gives special merit to the holy figure. And in their sacred presence the worshipper in ecstatic delight and devotion loses himself and remembers the beautiful lines of Tirumangai Ālvar :

> "குலந்தரும் செல்வம் தந்திடும் அடியார் படுதுயர் ஆயினவெல்லாம்
> நிலந்தரஞ் செய்யும், நீள்விசும்பு அருளும், அருளொடு
> பெருநிலமளிக்கும்
> வலந்தரும், மற்றுந்தந்திடும், பெற்றதாயினும் ஆயின செய்யும்
> நலந்தரும் சொல்லை நான் கண்டுகொண்டேன் நாராயண
> என்னும் நாமம்."

The structures of further interest within the prakaras number about thirty-eight. Of these, the sanctum of the Alvars, Sri Rama, the Paramapathanathar, Srinivasa Perumal, Boja Ramar are of particular interest.

The several gopuras and mandapas in the temple and its general layout, built during the centuries are of different patterns of the Dravidian style of architecture. Its mode is particularly Vaishnavite, and a pilgrim to Srirangam is doubly blessed by the grace of Sri Ranganātha, and by the abundant cultural education that he acquires.

The temple covers an area of nearly one hundred and sixty acres, the outermost prakara measuring 155·6 acres and the innermost ·9 acres and the total length of all the prakara walls being above 32,154 feet or nearly six miles.

The Temple Jewels:

The Temple Jewels are of priceless value and of high cultural interests. They are myriad, and have been contributed by ruling monarchs of many centuries. Many of them are not to be identified regarding their donors. Some, there are of historical interest, of Krishnappa Nayak (A.D. 1452), of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayak (1704-31 A.D.), and of others. Almost a recent one is a gold plate presented by King Edward VII on the occasion of his visit (as Prince of Wales) to South India in 1875. The collection includes a precious

garment of pearls (*Mut-thangi*)* now renovated in five pieces and valued at about eleven lakhs, which was originally presented by Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayak (A.D.1706-1732). A coat of gold and gems presented by Chokkanatha and his queen Rani Mangammal (A.D. 1689), is another. It is in eleven pieces set with rubies, emeralds and diamonds. This Irattina Angi (இரத்தின அங்கி) and Ratna-Kreetam (இரத்தின கிரீடம்) are valued at about eleven lakhs. An earlier Ratna-angi and a Kreetam is also mentioned as presented by the Nayak Krishnappa and his son Kumara Krishnappa costing about a lakh and fifty thousands *pons*, and this was consecrated by Kumara Narasimha Vathoola Desikar—(*Koyilolugu* p. 150)

The *Ratna-angi* presented by Rani Mangammal, was renovated in 1911, and Sri Ranganatha wears this for *Mohini Alankaram*, only once in the year on the *Vaikuntha Ekadasi* day. And the *Mut-thangi* decorates the recumbent moolasthana figure of Sri Ranganatha only for four days in the year during the *Vaikuntha Ekadasi* festival. Among the other jewels, the set of *Kreedams* or crowns are of great artistic merit, and the one known as *Pandiyan Kondai* (பாண்டியன் கொண்டை) is of much antiquarian interest. The Kreedams for the head are in different shapes to suit the different *alankārams* or decorations suited to the festival; such as the *Mohini Alankaram* when God Ranganātha is decorated as a Mohini; the Muttangi or Coat of Pearls seva or darsan when Ranganatha is adorned with this Coat from neck to feet and the feet adorned with gold Kavachams. A fee is levied from pilgrims for this special *seva* from within the *sanctum sanctorum*.

These temple jewels are a rare collection, and they are exhibited by the temple authorities for a fee of Rupees fifty when high dignitaries visit the temple.

The Temple festivals:

Srirangam is a perennial centre of pilgrimage for worshippers from all parts of India. For 322 days in the

* See *Indian Express*, 3-1-1963.

year, the entire festivals of the Vaishnavite calendar are celebrated. The most attractive and one of the grandest in South India is the *Vaikuntha Ekadasi* or *Tiru-adhyayana Utsavam* which falls in Margazhi (December–January) and lasts for twenty-one days. The special characteristic feature of the festival is that, as originally instituted by Tirumangai Alvar, the *Tiruvaimozhi* verses are given the *Adhyayana* or chantings, and expositions in discourses in the presence of Sri Ranganātha. The festival is of two periods: The festivities of the first ten days begun by Tirumangai Mannan are called *Pukal-patthu* (பகல் பத்து) and held in the Chitra Mandapam or *Pakal-patthu Mantapam*. The festive processions take place in the day-time, and Ranganatha returns to His sanctum thereafter. Those of the succeeding ten days begun by St. Nathamuni (824–924 A.D.) occur at nights and are called the Rāppaththu (இராப் பத்து). The first day of *Rāppaththu* is the Ekadasi day. It is believed that those who worship the God on that special occasion and pass through with the Deity the northern entrance of the third enclosure called the *Paramapadha Vāsal* (பரமபத வாசல்) which is opened only on this occasion and on the succeeding nine days, are sure of salvation.

During the second part of the festival the deity starts very early in the morning from His sanctum, passes through the *Pon-Kambam* (பொன் கம்பம்) *pradakshina* and the *Paramapadha vasal* and the *Thavittarai vāsal*, and reaches the thousand pillared mantapa. In front of this great mandapa a spacious *pandal* is erected and illuminated with multi-coloured electrical fittings and beautifully decorated as suited for the great occasion. During this *Irappatthu*, Sri Perumal halts at this mandapa during the whole day and till 9 p.m. when He returns to His sanctum to listen to the chanting of the *Prabandhas*, and on the last day bestows *Moksha* to Nammalvar and the Alvars.

Another feature of this *Rappattu* of ten days is the *Ekantha Sevai*. This was instituted by the then Nayak ruler Vijiaranga Chokkanatha, and he enjoyed exclusively

the darsan of Ranganātha as the procession entered into the *Nazhi-Kêttān vāsal;* and before entering into the *sanctum sanctorum* the King sang while the Queen danced to the music, quite besides themselves in the holy presence. Those days are over, the Lord now enjoys a special Veena performance by the staff player, who is an expert and a devotee, in the presence of a select few who are permitted for this worship.

The Car Festivals:

There are besides two car festivals during the month of *Thai* (January) and *Chithrai* (April) on a large scale, and also the Go-ratham in February-March. During the Chithrai festival in April, Ranganatha halts at the Sesha Rayar Mantapa which is for the âsthana festival. The Ekantha Sevai (ஏகாந்த சேவை) for the Lord takes place on the 6th to 9th day of the *Rāppatthu,* as the deity returns to his sanctum in the night after the festivities.

The Theppam Festival:

The Theppam festival comes in Mâsi (March) and is a grand spectacle to see the deity in ;the decorated float lit completely with brilliant electrical lamps. It is a sight not to be missed.

Thulukka Nachiyar:

Particular mention has to be made here, of the Moslem devotee of Sri Ranganātha: Sultani, also known as *Thulukka Nachiyar,* the daughter of a Padusha of Delhi. Her sanctum in the sixth court, ornamented in Mohammadan style, contains her painting in fresco, and every morning Sri Ranga natha and the Muslim devotee are given offerings of wheat cakes (Rotti) and butter, green gram, cold milk, and sugar which are typical of a Muslim breakfast—*Chotta hazari* with *pan-supari,* the betel leaves smeared with chunam on the frontal side as is done by Muslims. Sri Ranganatha wears a Muslim Kaili during the *Tirumanjanams.* The devotee also

receives a special *Kaithala-sevai Darsan* (**கைத்தல சேவை தரிசனம்**) as when the Lord enters this Mantapa, during the ten days of Pagalpattu festival.

In view of the event, it is related that the Pādusha gave the temple a Jaghir of 57 villages, and in the days of the Nawabs themselves the Government took them away for a annual payment of Rs. 50,000/, and later the sum was reduced to Rs, 40,000/, and during the British period the amount was still further reduced to a *Mohini* allowance of Rs. 35,000/- which is continued to this day.

Another of such devotees was *Chola-Kula-Valli,* the daughter of the Chola King *Nanda* who ruled the Chola Kingdom from his capital at Uraiyoor. He was of the dynasty of Dharma Varma, and finding that the Princess would have set her heart on Lord Ranganātha, gave her away in marriage to the Lord, along with a royal bounty of wealth as her marriage portion. The bride was taken to the sacred precincts and she attained beatitude. The Chola in religious devotion gave all his wealth to the Lord and constructed the holy sanctum sanctorum, the *Tirumamani mantapa,* reconstructed the gopurams and the temple walls.

Accounts relating to this Chola devotee find mention in *Nisulapuri Mahatmyam, Divya suri-charitha, Lakshmi-kavya* and *Rangaraja charita banam.*

The Temple administration

The Hindu rulers before the Nawabs, the Mohammadan ruler Nawab Wallajah, and the Christian Directors of the East India Company till 1842, administered the management of this temple. After that, for about two decades, the institution was placed under private management; and thereafter under a Statutory Committee. The affairs of the temple are now being run according to a scheme of administration framed by the *Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Board* in B.O. No. 675 of 2—3—1942, by a Board of Trustees.

A fixed allowance of Rs. 35,000/- styled the "Mohini" (in view of the extensive and valuable landed endowments

of the Devasthanam) resumed by Government, and the votive offerings from all parts of India aggregating in all to about five lakhs and Thirty Nine thousands of Rupees, form the income of this important religious institution. A study of the temple inscriptions on stone and on copper plates, the Hindivi list of fasli 1326, and the list of villages from which the Mohini amount is still drawn, leads to the conclusion that 92 villages formed the Endowments of the Devasthanam in the days of the Nayak Sovereignty of the South, and that the whole, or later, part of the income of such villages, were paid by successive sovereign powers to the *Devasthanam* for the maintenance of the worship according to established rituals and immemorial usage, and for repairs to the temple buildings.

News and Notes

TAGORE IN INDIAN LANGUAGES

The Sahitya Akademi has made available to readers in all Indian languages a comprehensive selection of Tagore's writings, representing the entire range of his versatile genius. The original Bengali text is also now made available for the first time in Devanagari script. In this series, 101 select poems of Tagore entitled *Ekottarsati*, 500 songs entitled *Gita Panchasati*, two novels: *Chokher Bali* and *Gora*, Tagore's select writings for children entitled *Bala Sahitya*, the first of the two volumes of plays, *Natya Saptak*, comprising *Visarjan, Chitrangada* and *Chirakumar Sabha* have been published so far. The remaining volumes listed below, are in press: *Ekavimsati* (21 short stories) ; *Yogayog* (novel) ; *Natya Saptak*, Vol. II, covering the plays *Raja, Dak Char, Muktadhara* and *Rakta Karabi;* and two volumes of *Nibandhamala*, the first one consisting of select religious, philosophic, educational, social and political essays and the second of other prose-writings including essays on literary themes, belles-letters, auto-biographical writings, travelogues and letters.

Besides these editions in Devanagari script, translations of the above volumes have been published in the following languages :

1. 101 poems: in Gujarati, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi, *TAMIL*, Telugu, and Urdu. A further selection of these poems has been published in Tibetan also.
2. 21 short stories: in Assamese, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi and *Tamil.*
3. *Chokher Bali* : in English (entitled *Binodini*), Hindi, Kashmiri, Marathi, Punjabi and *Tamil.*

4. *Gora*: in Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Telugu and Urdu.
5. *Yogayog*: in Assamese, Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi Punjabi, Sindhi, Telugu and Urdu.
6. Volume I of the Plays in Assamese, Gujarati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, *TAMIL* and Urdu.
7. Volumes II of the Plays in Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi and *TAMIL.*
8. Volume I of the Essays in Gujarati, Hindi and Malayalam.
9. Volume II of the Essays in Kannada and Telugu.
10. Tagore's writings for children in *TAMIL.*

The remaining volumes are in various stages of preparation. Special Homage Volumes under the title of *Ravindrapaharam* in Malayalam and Ravindranath Tagore-*Vazhkaiyum Kavitaiyum* in Tamil have also been published.

—Sahitya Akademi, May 1964, No. 5 page 3.

THE COMMON HERITAGE

From the introduction to the *History of Bengali Literature* by Dr. Sukumar Sen, 14th November, 1959 :

" It was a happy idea of the Sahitya Akademi to organise the publication of *historical studies of the literatures of our various languages in* India. One of the principal functions of the Sahitya Akademi is to encourage all these great languages of India and to bring them closer to each other. Their roots and inspiration have been much the same and the mental climate in which they have grown up has been similar. All of them have also faced the same type of impact from Western thought and influence. Even the languages of

Southern India, with their different origins, have grown up in similar conditions. It may, therefore, be said that each of these great languages is not merely the language of a part of India, but is essentially a language of India, representing the thought and culture and development of this country in its manifold forms.

"It may not be possible for many of us to have direct acquaintances with the literatures of our various languages. But it is certainly desirable that every person of India who claims to be educated should know something about languages other than his own. He should be acquainted with the classics and the famous books written in those languages and thus imbibe into his being the broad and many-sided bases of India's culture.

" In order to help in this process, the Sahitya Akademi has been bringing out translations of well-known books from each of our languages into others and is sponsoring these histories of Indian literatures. The Akademi is thus widening and deepening the basis of our cultural knowledge and making people realise the essential unity of India's thought and literary background."

—*Sahitya Akademi, July 1964, No. 7 page 4.*

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